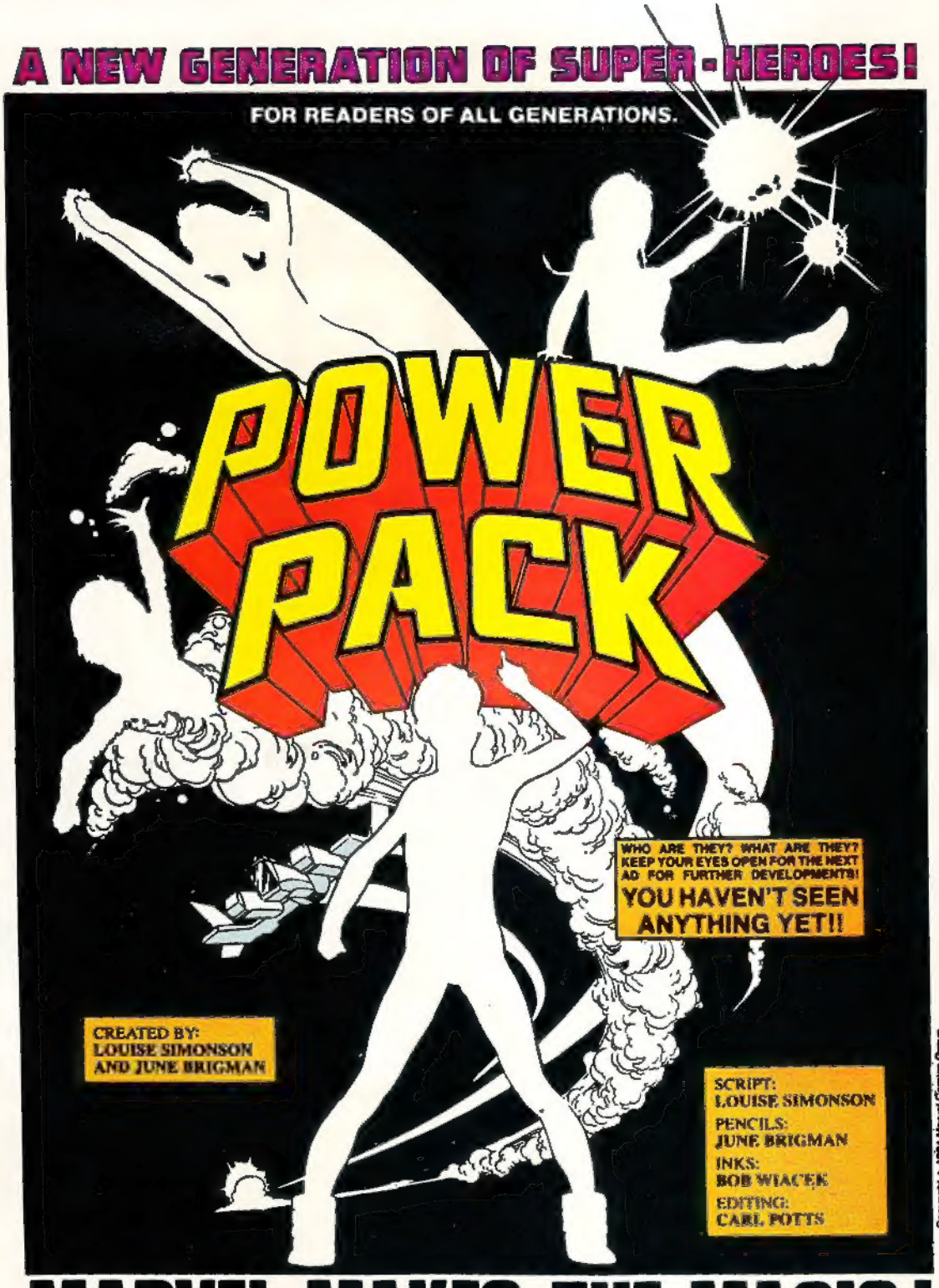
MARVEL
THE OFFICIAL MARVEL® NEWS MAGAZINE!
MARVEL AGE™
AN EPIC INTERVIEW WITH ARCHIE GOODWIN!
ONLY 35¢
15
JUNE
©1984 MARVEL COMICS GROUP
PARKER

A NEW GENERATION OF SUPER-HEROES!

FOR READERS OF ALL GENERATIONS.



MARVEL MAKES THE MAGIC!

ON SALE MAY 1st

Characters appearing on the cover are copyrighted as follows:
Dreadstar © 1984 by James P. Starlin. All rights reserved. Weirdworld © 1984 Marvel Comics Group. All rights reserved. Marada the She-Wolf © 1984 by Chris Claremont and John Bolton. All rights reserved. Coyote © 1984 by Steve Englehart. All rights reserved. Starstruck © 1984 by Elaine Lee and Michael W. Kaluta. All rights reserved. Six from Sirius © 1984 by Doug Moench and Paul Gulacy. All rights reserved. Last of the Dragons © 1984 by Carl Potts. All rights reserved. Generation Zero © 1984 by Pepe Moreno. All rights reserved. Dr. Watchstop © 1984 by Ken Macklin. All rights reserved. Cheech Wizard © 1984 by Barbara Bode. All rights reserved. Abraxas and the Earthman © 1984 by Rick Veitch. All rights reserved. Archie Goodwin © 1984 by Archie Goodwin. All rights reserved.

Stan Lee presents

MARVEL AGE™

Jim Shooter
Editor in Chief

Jim Salicrup
Editor and Design Director

Mark Lerer
Assistant Editor

Jim Massara
Coming Attractions

Bob Kessel
Designer

Dan Crespi
Art/Production Coordinator

Ron Zalme
Assistant Art/Production Coordinator

Joe Albelo Morrie Kuramoto
Harry Candelario Ken Lopez
Rob Carosella John Morelli
Donald Hudson Barry Shapiro
Production

Brenda Mings
Typesetter

Paul Becton George Roussos
Colorists

Craig Anderson Lynn Cohen
Friendly Assistance

Rick Parker
Cover

Carol Kalish
Direct Sales Representative

Peter David
Marsha Rosenberg
Steve Saffel
Assistant Direct Sales Managers

Irving Forbush
Back in the Saddle Again

EDITORIAL

"Money Talks!"
by Jim Salicrup

Can we talk? When you dine in a fine restaurant, enjoy a great meal, and then pay the check, don't you show your appreciation by leaving a tip? Or if you've ever had the misfortune of riding with a terribly rude New York City cab driver, don't you still leave a generous gratuity, hoping that the cabbie won't run you over after you step out of the cab? (Good for you if you don't!) What am I getting at? Well, why not show your appreciation by leaving tips to comic book writers and artists after you've savored a particularly good super hero tale! Seems only fair to me! Now, you must not simply tip out of habit! Let the creative crew of your favorite mag *earn* their gratuity! They must not learn to *expect* a tip every issue — else they might get lazy! Make them work hard... please you!

We really must apologize for this month's ridiculous editorial. We don't know what's gotten into **Jim Salicrup**. He hasn't been himself all week. The pressure of trying to put together this magazine month after month must have finally gotten to him . . . next issue, **Jim** will be back with a normal editorial — it'll be about the crazy items he finds while cleaning out his desk. So be here next month . . . please?

...work harder to please you!

Similarly, if you have any serious complaints, let the management know you're upset! If you were dining out and you found a fly floating in your soup, you'd immediately demand to see the chef! So if a particular story offends your comic book sensibilities, you should immediately complain to the Editor in Chief!

In any discussion about tipping, the question inevitably comes up, "How much should I tip?" A good rule of thumb in public establishments is 15% to 20% of the total bill — but in comics, that just wouldn't be enough! After all, if you tipped 15% on a 60¢ comic (notice how I don't have to say a 60¢ *Marvel* comic, because there aren't any other types of 60¢ comics any more!), that would only be 9¢! That sure isn't a lot to show your favorite Bullpenner that you really care! Of course, on one of the Marvel Graphic Novels, the tip would be higher — but don't get carried away leaving large tips just to impress a date...

...a date, either!

Now, you may wonder, "Where do I leave my tip?" Whatever you do, *don't* leave it with the owner of the comics shop where you buy your comics — despite his sloppy appearance, he's probably rich already! You should leave your money on a small silver serving tray, provided by me, **Jim Salicrup** . . .

MARVEL AGEnda:

Coming Attractions 2
Newswatch 6
Top Ten 6
Behind the Lines 7
G.I. Joe 8
Marvel Age — 1963 12
Hembeck 16
Archie Goodwin 18
Marvel Fanfare 23
New Talent 27
Bullpen Bulletins 29
Letters 30

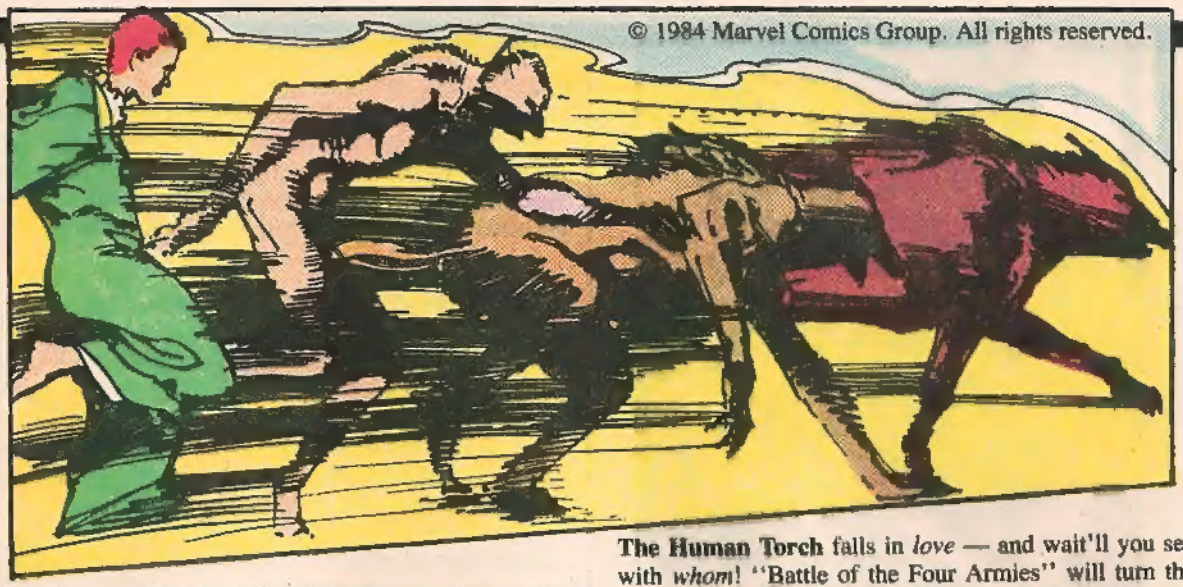
MARVEL AGE™ Vol. 1, No. 15, June, 1984. Published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, James E. Galton, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. Michael Hobson, Vice-President, Publishing. Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. Published monthly. Copyright© 1984 by Marvel Comics Group, a division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved. Price 35¢ per copy in the U.S. and Canada. Subscription rate $4.00 for 12 issues. Canada and Foreign, $6.00. Printed in the U.S.A. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. MARVEL AGE (including all prominent characters featured in the issue), and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are trademarks of the MARVEL COMICS GROUP. **POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO MARVEL AGE, 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, 10TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. Application to mail at second-class postage rates is pending at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices.**

MARVEL COMING ATTRACTIONS

© 1984 Marvel Comics Group. All rights reserved.

Danielle Moonstar faces off against the demon bear that slew her parents, in this dramatic moment from **NEW MUTANTS #19!** Rendered by new **NEW MUTANTS** artist **Bill Sienkiewicz!**

© 1984 Marvel Comics Group. All rights reserved.



Here is a complete checklist of what's happening in all the Marvel titles bearing a September cover date. A **Limited Series** is a title which will only run for a specific number of issues. A **Direct Sales** title is available only at selected outlets. **Shipping Date** refers to the date the comics leave the printer. A word to the wise — please tell your comics specialty shop owner which titles you want to buy as soon as possible! Marvel Comics sell out so fast that unless your comics shop owner knows which titles you want, you may not get them!

Titles shipping May 1, on sale May 22:

THE THING #15 — Sure, **Ben Grimm** expects to get hit with rotten eggs back on Yancy Street — but here, on an alien world? It's not your average neighborhood gang that torments **The Thing** either — but you'll only get to see them in Part V of "Rocky Grimm, Space Ranger!" So run, do not walk, to buy this offbeat issue! Written by **Mike Carlin**, penciled by **Ron Wilson**, and inked by **Joe Sinnott**!

DAREDEVIL #210 — **Micah Synn** hits **the Kingpin** where it hurts the most! That'll give you *some* idea of his power — and then, he challenges **Daredevil** to break the laws he's sworn to protect! What can **D.D.** do with his back against the wall? He doesn't have time to find out — because **Crossbow** returns! And who do you think he's hunting *this* time! Script by **Denny O'Neil**, plot and pencils by **David Mazzucchelli**, and inks by **Danny Bulanadi**.

NEW MUTANTS #19 — How do you kill a creature that cannot possibly be killed? **The New Mutants** better figure out a way! Because if even *their* combined powers aren't enough — the mystic bear that attacked **Danielle Moonstar** will cause untold tragedy! **Chris Claremont** wrote it and **Bill Sienkiewicz** penciled and inked it — so you won't dare miss it!

MARVEL SUPER HEROES: SECRET WARS (Limited Series) #5 — *Four* mighty teams of super champions! Fighting **Galactus** — *and* fighting each other! Meanwhile, **Doctor Doom** waits in the wings — and what he plans to do is anyone's guess! Not enough? **The Human Torch** falls in *love* — and wait'll you see with *whom*! "Battle of the Four Armies" will turn the Marvel Universe on its head! Written by **Jim Shooter**, penciled by **Mike Zeck**, and inked by **John Beatty**!

CONAN THE KING #24 — **Conan's** son is kidnapped! Where is he? It's too much for even **King Conan** to handle alone! But when he and **the Black Dragons** take off after **Taurus**, they encounter the least expected obstacle of all! "A Witch's Tale" is written by **Alan Zelenetz**, penciled by guest-artist **Dave Simons**, and inked by **Geof Isherwood**! 48pp. $1.00

Titles shipping May 8, on sale May 29:

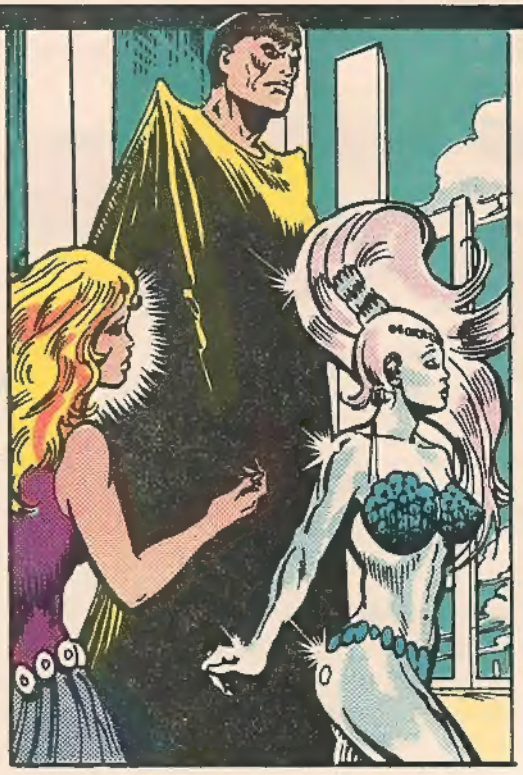
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #256 — Meet the latest Marvel super villain! He's the powerful and plunderous **Puma** — and he's got **Spider-Man** on the run! Because he's fast — because he's agile — because he's got super senses! And most of all, he's working for **The Rose**! That's right — **The Rose** is back . . . and he wants **Spidey** *dead*! Never let it be said that the wall-crawler has it easy! Written by **Tom DeFalco**, penciled by **Ron Frenz**, and inked by **Joe Rubinstein**!

CAPTAIN AMERICA #297 — **Cap's** seen it all in his career — and he's always come out on top! But now, **the Red Skull** forces **Captain America** to re-live the most horrible moment of his life! Can even a living legend stand the shock? **Mother Superior** and **Baron Zemo** add to the reprehensible torment, in "All My Sins Remembered," written by **J.M. DeMatteis**, penciled by **Paul Neary**!

THOR #347 — The stunning conclusion to **the Dark Elf** saga! **Thor** must rescue the beautiful **Lorelei**! It would be easy for our Thunder God to penetrate England's fortress where she's prisoner—if it weren't the stronghold of . . . **Malekith**! Written, penciled, and inked for your awestruck enjoyment by **Walt Simonson**!

INDIANA JONES #21 — **Indiana Jones** has only 24 hours to live! But he, **Marion**, and **Marcus** must still find **Ben Ali Ayoob**! It takes place in Switzerland — where our heroes struggle on, knowingly accompanied by a paid assassin! Will **Indy** get out of *this* one alive? Don't ask! Plotted by **David Michelinie**, with script, penciling, and inking by a surprise creative team!

© 1984 Marvel Comics Group. All rights reserved.



The gentleman's name is **Bekk**! He looks formidable — and you'll see him in his crystalline form in **CRYSTAR** #9!

POWER PACK #2 — Four ordinary kids, just like you and me — out to infiltrate a military base! Can they handle their new super-powers well enough to pull off the life-or-death mission? If they can't get to their own father's invention in time — it's world wide destruction! Written by **Louise Simonson**, penciled by **June Brigman**, and inked by **Bob Wiacek**!

CRYSTAR #9 — War! The forces of **Order** combat the forces of **Chaos** — and **Malachon** unites with **Chaos**! There's a *new* crystal warrior, too! Meet **Bekk**! Which side will *he* take? Written by **Jo Duffy**, penciled by **Ricardo Villamonte**, and inked by **Dave Simons**! Featuring a full-color cover painted by **Michael Golden**!

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #103 — In the magical world beyond the mist, **Conan** has an uncanny lookalike! He's **King Konar** — out to stop a war and save a queen! Will **Conan** co-operate — and can even *he* be any help against . . . "The Treachery of the Iron Wolf?" Written by **Michael Fleisher**, penciled and inked by **Val Mayerik**! $1.50. A Marvel Magazine.

Titles shipping **May 15**, on sale **June 5**:

INCREDIBLE HULK #299 — The greatest city in the world braces itself for attack! **Gabe Jones** and agents of **S.H.I.E.L.D.** must prevent an onslaught by . . . **the Incredible Hulk**? What's happening here? "Strange Days Have Found Us" also guest-stars **Doctor Strange** and **Nightmare**! Written by **Bill Mantlo**, layouts by **Sal Buscema**, and finished art by **Gerry Talaoc**!

AVENGERS #247 — The secrets of **Starfox** — a long-forgotten past, and some other secrets he doesn't want **the Avengers** to know about! Meanwhile, **the Eternals** find their destiny at last — and set the wheels in motion for a truly cosmic event! Written by **Roger Stern**, penciled by **Al Milgrom**, and inked by **Joe Sinnott**!

CONAN THE BARBARIAN #162 — **The Brotherhood of the Falcon** is on one side — **Jergal Zadh** is on the other! **Conan** and **Fafnir** are caught in the middle! Which do *you* think would be the worse enemy — a band of professional assassins — or an interdimensional demon? Too bad for **Conan** — he's got to face them *both*! "Destroyer in the Flame" is written by **Michael Fleisher**, and penciled and inked by **John Buscema**!

MARVEL TALES #167 — Re-presenting "The Wondrous Worlds of **Doctor Strange**," from **SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL** #2! Story by **Stan Lee** — drawn by **Steve Ditko**! Need we say more?

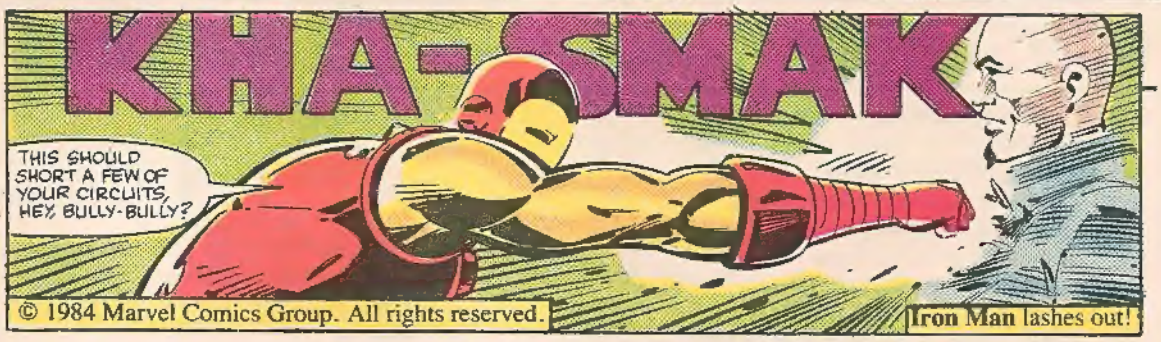
X-MEN #185 — **Rogue** — accused of killing a **S.H.I.E.L.D.** agent! Even though she's innocent, she and **Storm** must face off against federal forces! And then, we find out more about **Forge** — what new complications could *this* mysterious personage present? Finally, not *one* — but *two* shock endings! Read "Public Enemy," written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **John Romita, Jr.**, and inked by **Dan Green**!

ROM #58 — Guest-starring **Ant-Man**! **The Dire Wraiths** infiltrate the insect world! And **Rom** is useless to stop them! Will *nothing* keep these vile and villainous vermin from achieving their hideous ends? Also guest-starring **Rick Jones**! "Plague of Insects" is written by **Bill Mantlo**, with layouts by **Sal Buscema**, and finished art by **Mel Candido**!

POWER MAN AND IRON FIST #109 — **The Reaper** is going to avenge the murder of a policeman — even if he has to kill innocent people to do it! That's where **Cage** and **the Fist** come in . . . unless of course it's . . . *too late*! Written by **Alan Rowlands**, penciled by **Greg La Rocque**, and inked by **Andy Mushynsky**!

G.I. JOE #27 — They were the closest of friends! Now they're deadly enemies! **Snake Eyes** and **Storm Shadow** face off on the streets of New York — in a battle to the death! And only *one* can survive! Who will it be? We're not gonna *tell* ya! Written by **Larry Hama**, and penciled by **Frank Springer**!

MARVEL FANFARE #16 — You've demanded his return! Now he's back! The one-and-only **Frank Miller**! Ever want to see **Frank** do his version of **Captain America**? Then read "The Rocket's Red Glare," written by **Roger McKenzie** and inked by **Joe Rubinstein**! Also in this issue, an all-new **Sub-Mariner** story, written by **Bill Mantlo** and penciled by **Mike Mignola**! High-quality Hudson paper. $1.50. Direct Sales Only.



Iron Man lashes out!

DREADSTAR #12 — Meet **Vanth Dreadstar** — again! And dig his new costume! Meanwhile, **Oedi** needs immediate medical attention! Too bad **Tuetun** is back, looking for revenge! With *that* mean tub of muscle on the loose, **Oedi** — and **Vanth** — and everyone *else* in his way — may not last the afternoon! Be prepared for anything! Written and penciled by **Jim Starlin**. High quality Baxter paper. $1.50. From the Epic Comics Line. Direct Sales Only.

EPIC ILLUSTRATED #25 — Love horror comics? Then you'll *really* dig "The Potty's Over," written and illustrated by **Berni Wrightson**! It's the most gruesome and ghastly story you've ever seen! Next, "The Sacred and the Profane" by **Dean Motter** and **Ken Steacy** finds the crew of St. Catherine's space exhibition about to make their last stand! How about "Apocrypha," by **John** and **Laura Lakey**, in which survivors of a nuclear holocaust struggle to re-build their world! Then we've got an all-new full-color story by **John Bolton**! Finally — hang on to your hats, now — a full-color cover painting by **Jeff Jones**! Aren't we extravagant this month! $2.50. A Marvel Magazine.

Titles shipping **May 22**, on sale **June 12**:

FANTASTIC FOUR #270 — He's **Terminus** and he just *won't* go *away*! Meaner than **Attila the Hun** and twice as ugly, he's out for **the F.F.'s** blood — and he doesn't care two cents for the planet Earth! Not even **Chief Wyatt Wingfoot** can help the **Fantastic Four** in their most dire moment — and that means *trouble*! Written, penciled, and inked by **John Byrne**!

MARVEL TEAM-UP #145 — **Blacklash** is back! He's the most dangerous psychotic ever to undertake a life of crime! Fighting *sane* villains is bad enough — how can **Spider-Man** and **Iron Man** defeat a totally unpredictable super-powered madman? They better find a way — or die! Written by **Tony Isabella**, penciled by **Greg LaRocque**, and inked by **Mike Esposito**!

IRON MAN #186 — **Tony Stark** arrives! He's in Silicon Valley, ready to re-build his business from the ground up! It *seems* like he's got his alcoholism problem licked — but can he cope with seeing **Rhodey** in his **Iron Man** uniform? You *knew* this dramatic confrontation *had* to come — are you *ready* for it? Written by **Denny O'Neil**, penciled by **Luke McDonnell**, and inked by **Steve Mitchell**! It's not what you expect!

PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #94 — **The Kingpin** can't come between **Spider-Man** and **the Black Cat** . . . or can he? He just *may* have an ace-in-the-hole — and that ace may just be . . . the man called **Silvermane**! What does that leave **Spidey** and **Felicia** with? It's too terrible to even ask! Written and penciled by **Al Milgrom**, and inked by **Jim Mooney**!

THE NEW DEFENDERS #135 — **The New Defenders** may not be your ordinary team of super heroes — but they've never met an adversary like *this*! He's **Blowtorch Brand** — and he's not your average arsonist! **Angel**, **Beast**, **Iceman**, **Gargoyle**, and **Moondragon** have to stop him — before he reduces New Mexico to a pile of ashes! "The Fire at Heaven's Gate" is written by **Peter B. Gillis**, penciled by **Don Perlin**, and inked by **Kim DeMulder**!

STAR WARS #87 — Marvel continues to present all-new post-*Jedi* adventures! It's a diplomatic mission, just perfect for **Princess Leia** and **Mon Mothma** to handle — until they stumble upon Imperial forces fighting to control a strategic stronghold! And the Imperial forces are *winning*! "Figurehead" is written by **Jo Duffy**, penciled by **Bob McLeod**, and inked by **Tom Palmer**!

ALPHA FLIGHT #14 — Meet **Gilded Lily**! She's more than a gold smuggler! And she smuggles more than gold! **Alpha Flight** must contend with *her* — while romantic conflicts threaten to tear the team apart! What's going on between **Aurora** and **Sasquatch**? *Read* this amazing adventure, written, penciled, and inked by **John Byrne** — and you'll find out!

Note: The information that appears in "Coming Attractions" is as complete and accurate as we can manage. Occasionally changes are made after this column is put together. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause! ●

NEWSWATCH

Blasts from the front line!

ITEM! Beginning with issue #14, **Mike Carlin** will take over as scripter for **THE THING! Mike** will work closely with **John Byrne** to maintain a tight continuity between "The Continuing Adventures of **Rocky Grimm**, Space Ranger" and the regular **FANTASTIC FOUR** title. **Mike** informs us that **The Thing** will be meeting some spectres from his past, and dealing with his own subconscious fears in the months to come!

ITEM! Those of you familiar with the authorized Marvel Comics Index series published by **George Olshevski** are in for a treat! **THE OFFICIAL INDEX TO MARVEL COMICS** will now be published as a monthly Marvel publication. Edited by **Mark Gruenwald**, the Index will follow the format of the **OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE**, a 32-page, comic sized magazine with no ads. Each issue will feature a new cover by a Marvel artist. The series will begin this spring with a full catalog of **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN**, with a full entry for every issue ever published. The first issue will sport a cover by **John Byrne**. Each entry will feature a full-color illustration of the cover, credits, publication date, and other vital information. The series will ultimately index all the Marvel super hero titles, and will be an excellent companion to the **MARVEL UNIVERSE HANDBOOK**!

ITEM! Now it can be told! **DAREDEVIL** #208 and #209 will feature stories plotted by two of the world's leading science fiction authors, **Harlan Ellison** and **Arthur Byron Cover**! **Ellison** is well-known for many sf classics and **Cover's** many credits include the novel *The Platypus*! The story these two gents have concocted for **D.D.**, though, should be unlike anything you've ever read, in a comic or otherwise! So *be* there!

ITEM! Here are some important schedule changes. **ELEKTRA SAGA** #4, previously shipping January 24, will now ship on February 7. **COYOTE** #5, previously shipping January 24, will now ship on February 28. And **MICRONAUTS** #59, previously shipping March 13, will now ship April 10.

ITEM! Cancellations! These Marvel series have bitten the dust: **KA-ZAR's** last issue will be #34, **MOON KNIGHT's** last issue will be #38, and **MICRONAUTS's** last issue is #59. But that's not the *whole* story . . . read on . . . !

ITEM! Ok! This is a little confusing — pay attention! **MICRONAUTS** and **MOON KNIGHT** have been cancelled — only to be revived as all-new, *newsstand-and-direct-sales* titles! **MOON KNIGHT** #1, first of a monthly 60¢ title, will ship June 12. **MICRONAUTS** #1, first of a monthly, 60¢ title, will also ship June 12. Turns out these two series have been so popular as direct-sales-only titles that we figured a whole new audience should thrill to the exploits of these mighty Marvel superstars!

ITEM! And last, but not least . . . There's gonna be a **HULK ANNUAL** #13, and it will ship on July 17! And **POWER PACK** #1 will be a special double sized 48 page premiere issue, priced at $1.

ITEM! That's all for now! Take care . . . and keep your powder dry! ●

We are saddened to announce the death of comics creator **Lennie Herman**, who passed away this January at the age of fifty-three. **Herman** had a long and distinguished career in comics. He was editor and writer for Harvey Publications from 1972-83, where he scripted **RICHIE RICH, DOLLAR THE DOG**, and **JACKIE JOKER**. **Herman** was Vice President of the Cartoonists Guild, his single-panel cartoons appearing in many major American magazine. He had contributed to Marvel's **CRAZY** Magazine, and had been working with Marvel to develop an upcoming new line of comics when he died.

Sid Jacobson, Herman's friend and colleague, said that "**Lennie** was the funniest person I'd ever known. He made a tremendous impact on everyone he knew. He was everyone's friend."

MARVEL'S TOP TEN

by **Jim Salicrup**

Here are the top selling titles Marvel published with a cover date of *June, 1983:*

1 — **X-MEN** #170
2 — **NEW MUTANTS** #4
3 — **FANTASTIC FOUR** #255
4 — **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #241
5 — **AVENGERS** #231
6 — **X-MEN CLASSICS** #2
7 — **DAREDEVIL** #195
8 — **DARK CRYSTAL (Limited Series)** #2
9 — **INCREDIBLE HULK** #284
10 — **SUPER-VILLAIN CLASSICS** #1

Once again thanks to **Ed Shukin** for providing us with this list which represents the best-selling titles based on total newsstand, direct, and subscription sales.

I gotta admit I'm crazy about bad guys. What would the world of super hero fiction be without them? *Incredibly dull*, of course. I've always considered Marvel's super-villain menagerie to consist of the nastiest, vilest, rottenest — in other words, *best* bad guys in the business! **Doctor Doom** has long been my favorite. So it kinda made me tingle all over to see that **SUPER-VILLAIN CLASSICS** was in the **TOP TEN** this month. Even though it featured the origin of **Galactus**, my *second* favorite baddie — although I'd never tell *him* that!

At the top of the list, the mutants continue to dominate, holding the number 1, 2 and 6 spots. Next issue we'll be featuring an interview with **Chris Claremont**, a **Bill Sienkiewicz New Mutants / X-Men** cover, and a profile of our pal, **Sal Buscema**. If you can't get enough mutant madness — be here next issue!

As for **THE FANTASTIC FOUR, AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, AVENGERS, DAREDEVIL**, and **THE INCREDIBLE HULK**, they continued to sell well too! ●

BEHIND THE LINES

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
A DIVISION OF CADENCE INDUSTRIES CORPORATION

January 6, 1984

Mr. Dick Giordano
Vice Pres.-Executive Editor
DC COMICS INC.
666 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10103

Dear Dick:

It was brought to my attention that in the "Flashgrams" letter column in issue number 332 of The Flash, you printed some erroneous information regarding a price increase for Marvel Comics.

In the answers to two separate letters, the unidentified DC Comics spokesperson says the following: "Marvel raised their prices this month. . ." and "Everybody's comics cost 75¢ now!"

That's just not true. Marvel Comics are still only 60¢ and we have no plans in the forseeable future to raise the price of our regular comics.

I'm sure this was just a simple mistake--perhaps the person who wrote the letter column heard false rumors of a price increase and took them as fact.

Nevertheless, I believe you owe us a retraction and an apology in the "Flashgrams" column and wherever else the misinformation was printed.

Best,

Jim Shooter
Editor-in-Chief

JS/ag

cc: Fan Press
IADD

© 1984 MCG

387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10016
212/696-0808

TELEX 238061 CAD PUB
427849 MARVEL

CADENCE
PUBLISHING

The G.I. JOE File

by **Dwight Jon Zimmerman**

Larry Hama describes one of Marvel's most successful non-super hero comics, **G.I. JOE**, as "very military — but it is not a war comic book." Over fifty active members and an awesome arsenal of state-of-the-art weaponry make the **G.I. Joe** team ready and equipped to combat international terrorism promulgated by the deadly secret organization known only as **Cobra**.

It began when Hasbro Industries wanted to revive the line of **G.I. Joe** action figures it had created years ago. Hasbro, though, wanted a concept behind their characters different from the straight "army" or "war" idea.

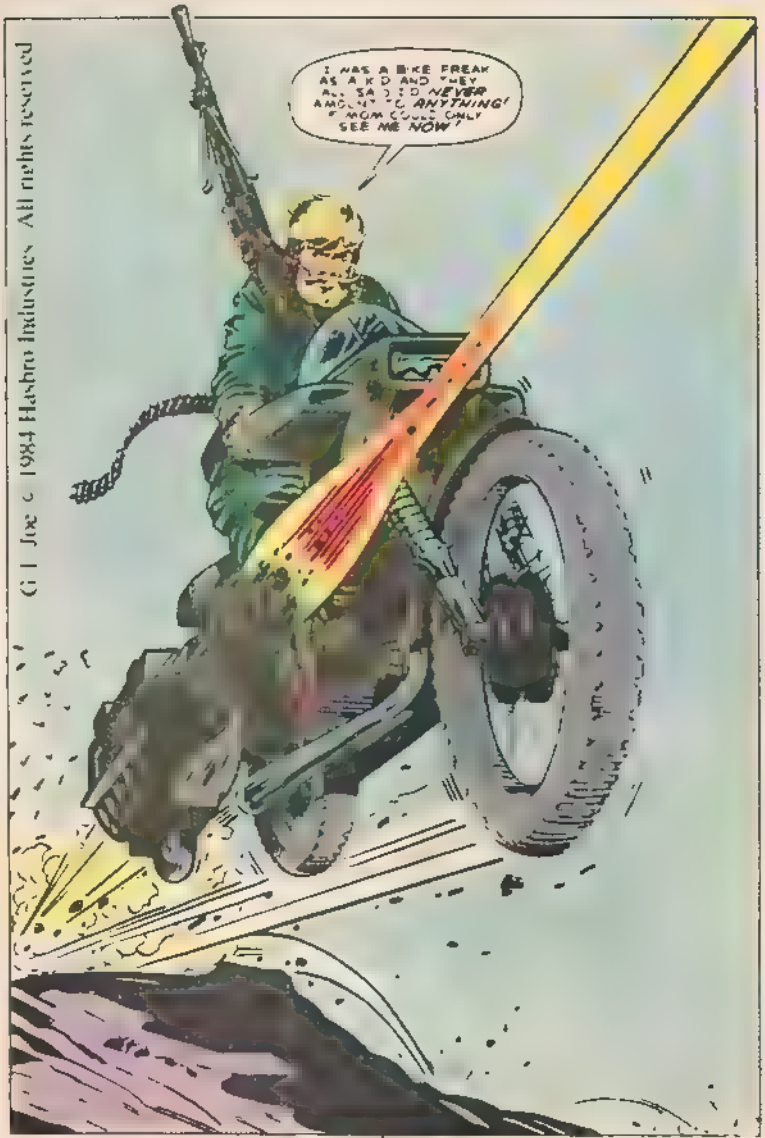
"Hasbro came to Marvel for our participation and development ideas," recalled **Hama**. "**Jim Shooter**, **Archie Goodwin**, **Tom DeFalco**, and I worked with them to create a whole new concept for the action adventurers. **Archie** came up with the name **Cobra** for the secret terrorist organization that would be the **Joe's** primary foe. I created the dossiers for the many different characters who make up the team called **G.I. Joe**."

The **G.I. Joe** dossiers contain detailed summaries of all the members of the **G.I. Joe** team and their antagonists. Written in clipped, authoritative prose, they list the individual **Joes** names, ranks, serial numbers, special skills, and include psychological profiles and written evaluations made by other team members. "I've lived with these characters for two years now," explains **Hama**, "and they've come alive for me. They're soldiers. They're professionals." **Hama** faces a challenge as a writer to concurrently present a distinctive group identity for **G.I. Joe** and maintain the strong individual identities the team

G.I. Joe © 1984 Hasbro Industries. All rights reserved.

Here's a never-before-published portfolio of some of **G.I. Joe's** top men by **Herb Trimpe**!

Short Fuse is the **G.I. Joe** team's mortar specialist! He's tough-minded, tempermental, and quick to anger . . . hence his nickname!


I WAS A BIKE FREAK AS A KID AND THEY ALL SAID I'D NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHING! I'M GONNA COME ONLY SEE ME NOW!
G I Joe © 1984 Hasbro Industries All rights reserved

Rock 'N Roll is military jargon for machine gun fire . . . and it's the name of this light machine gun specialist for **G.I. Joe**!

members have. Because each member has a different combat specialty, employs different weapons, and wears individual clothing, **Larry** can visually "fix" each character's presence. A clearly defined chain of command beginning with the **Joes'** leader, **Hawk**, and the soldiers' combined sense of purpose against terrorism, help establish the team's identity.

The dossiers are merely one facet in the stringent realism that **Hama** strives to maintain as writer of the series. "The **Joes'** adventures are as realistic as I can write them. I'm accurate with military terminology and descriptions of their equipment. I keep up with the military's latest technological advances. For instance, if you fought in World War II, you might not know that the military phonetic alphabet changed from 'Able, Baker, Charlie, Dog," to 'Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta.' There are no more corporals, they're specialists. The military is using a new style of helmet, and switching from serial numbered dog tags to computer chips with soldiers' social security numbers. As changes are made, I make it a point to incorporate them into the **G.I. JOE** series. Because I'm so particular with the details of my research, it takes me three times as long to write one **G.I. JOE** adventure as it does to write an adventure for any other character."

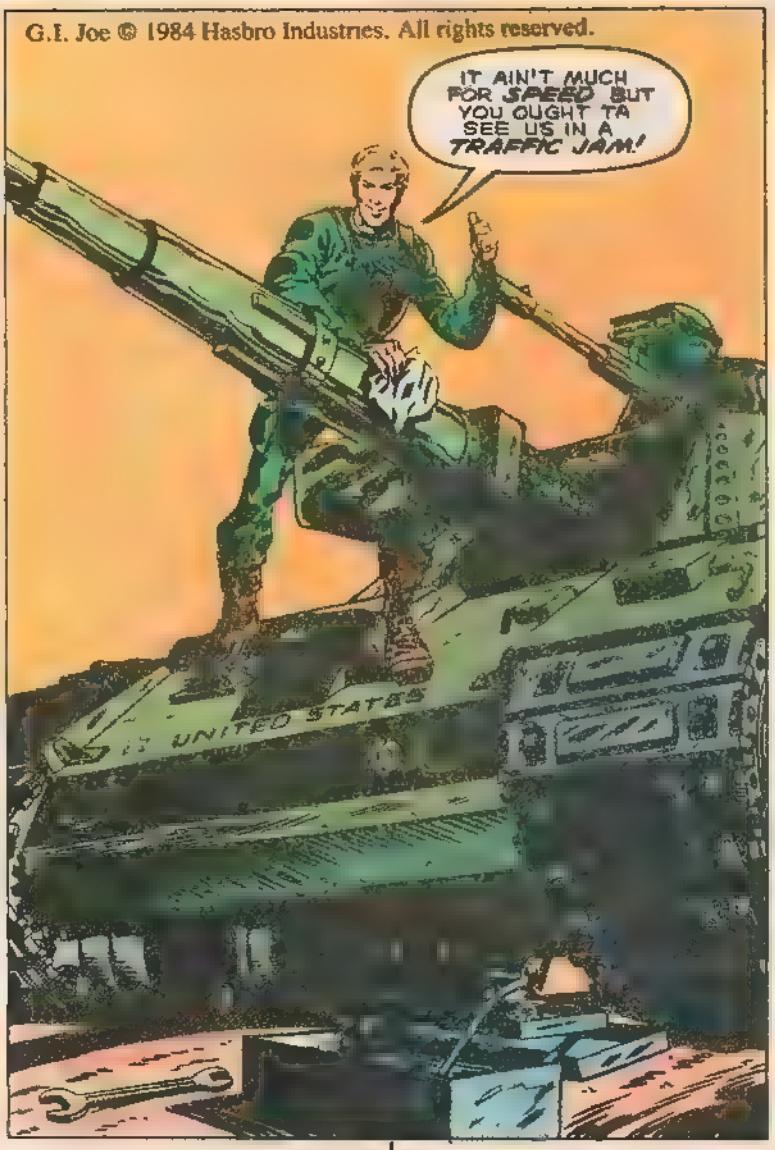
As writer for **G.I. JOE**, Larry has explored many novel and unusual approaches to telling a story. The most ambitious such undertaking was in issue #21, in which the story was told entirely without captions or word balloons. For this special experiment, **Larry**, a talented artist as well as writer, penciled breakdowns for finisher **Steve Leialoha**. "In comics, the story is all," **Larry** explained. "Anything that keeps the action from flowing from panel to panel and page to page is a detriment. The story must be clear. You can't lose tempo. You can't lose pace. Otherwise, you lose your reader. I wanted the story in issue #21 to be especially clear, so that the reader could make that magic jump for himself. Not only did the story have a lot of action, but it introduced a new character, and dredged up some bits of by-play concerning **Destro** and **the Baroness of Cobra**. Finally, a very important piece of information at the end of the story appeared about the relationship between **Storm**

G I. Joe © 1984 Hasbro Industries All rights reserved

Zap is the **Joe's** anti-armor specialist who doubles as the team's demolitions expert! He's quite a unique character . . . as are all the members of **G.I. Joe!**

IF YOU THINK I'M GOING TO BE THE ONE TO TELL A FOUR-STAR HOW TO LIGHT HIS CIGAR... YOU'RE NUTS!
RANGE No. 3
AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY-
STAY BEHIND YELLOW LINE WHEN RED FLAG IS DISPLAYED
POLICE ALL BRASS!

G.I. Joe © 1984 Hasbro Industries. All rights reserved.



Steeler, the **Joe** from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is expert at operating the **Joes' mobat tank . . . among other things**!

Shadow, the ninja for **Cobra**, and **Snake-Eyes**."

"There's a lot of political infighting going on within **Cobra's** ranks," **Larry** continued. "It's turning into a real, machiavellian power struggle. These villains have hopes, fears, and aspirations, just like the **Joes**. But the main difference between **Cobra** and the **Joes** is that the members of **Cobra** really can't trust one another. In **G.I. Joe**, however, you're among your brothers, and you can trust them with your life."

Unlike a war comic book, limited by the types of stories it can present, **G.I. JOE**, set in the present day and starring a group that fights high-technology terrorists, is open to a virtually unlimited range of story premises. A lot of things will be happening in the months to come. The Pit, headquarters to the **G.I. Joe** team, was recently destroyed, and will be rebuilt during the coming year. It will be more secure, and more visually exciting, than the old headquarters were. For instance, the interior is being redesigned so that at any given time, in any given scene, the reader will be able to tell what subterranean level the **Joes** are on. More surprises are in store. One issue will reveal the origin of **Snake-Eyes**, the mystery-man of the **G.I. Joe** team. Further, loyalties will shift within the ranks of **Cobra** . . . *and* within the ranks of **G.I. Joe** itself. One **Joe** will defect to the side of **Cobra**!

The reader response to **Hama's** work on **G.I. JOE** has been wild! Beamed **Larry**, "We get an incredible volume of mail. We have a special box in the Marvel mailroom just for **G.I. JOE**. The overwhelming majority of our mail is positive. Sometimes the readers know more about the things we use in the story than *I* do! I was taken to task by a nine-year-old reader for overstating the blast-proofness of the Pit in the first issue. This reader even trotted out all the figures on megatonnage just to prove his point! That sort of response shows me that people really care about the kind of work we're doing."

G.I. JOE, then, more than fulfills the promise that everyone saw three years ago. By exploring new types of comic book stories and ways to tell them, **G.I. JOE** has redefined what constitutes a military comic book. In the battle against the terrorists of **Cobra**, it is winning. ●

MARVEL AGE™ 1963

THE STRANGEST SUPER-HEROES OF ALL!
the X-MEN
1 SEPT
IN THE SENSATIONAL FANTASTIC FOUR STYLE!
X-MEN VERSUS MAGNETO EARTH'S MOST POWERFUL SUPER VILLAIN!
DON'T MISS THIS FABULOUS FIRST ISSUE!
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

The original **X-Men** — as they first appeared in 1963. Recognize **Cyclops**, **Iceman**, **Angel**, **Beast**, and **Marvel Girl**!

© 1984 Marvel Comics Group All rights reserved.

by **Warren Reece**

Nineteen sixty-three was the identifying year of the Marvel Age of Comics. For, in 1963, "a little terrier dog, yapping at the heels of the big publishers," as **Stan Lee** once referred to Marvel, took on its group name and distinctive picture corner trademark. This isn't to say that no such things existed in any form prior to the May, 1963 issues. Back in the golden age, **HUMAN TORCH #26** (Spring, 1947) carried a "Marvel Group" picture corner on its cover, and earlier, two similarly designed **Torch** picture corners proclaiming "A Marvel Magazine" appeared on **MARVEL MYSTERY COMICS #76** (December, 1946) and #77 (January, 1947). Various other cover trademarks were tried over the years on and off, including a Marvel Comics circle, an "M.C." in a little box, and a tiny "Atlas" globe during the 1950's. However, this time, it was different. The new picture corner covers, and the "pin-up" house ads inside, displaying full-length pics of **Thor**, **Spidey**, **Iron Man**, **The Torch**, **Ant-Man**, and **the Fantastic Four**, were bold and exciting — a dramatic clarion call for fans of heroic fiction to rally 'round. And rally they did! Now let's take a look at some of the events that kept them rallying!

Without question, March was *the* spectacular month of 1963. In a double-header, **AMAZING SPIDER-**

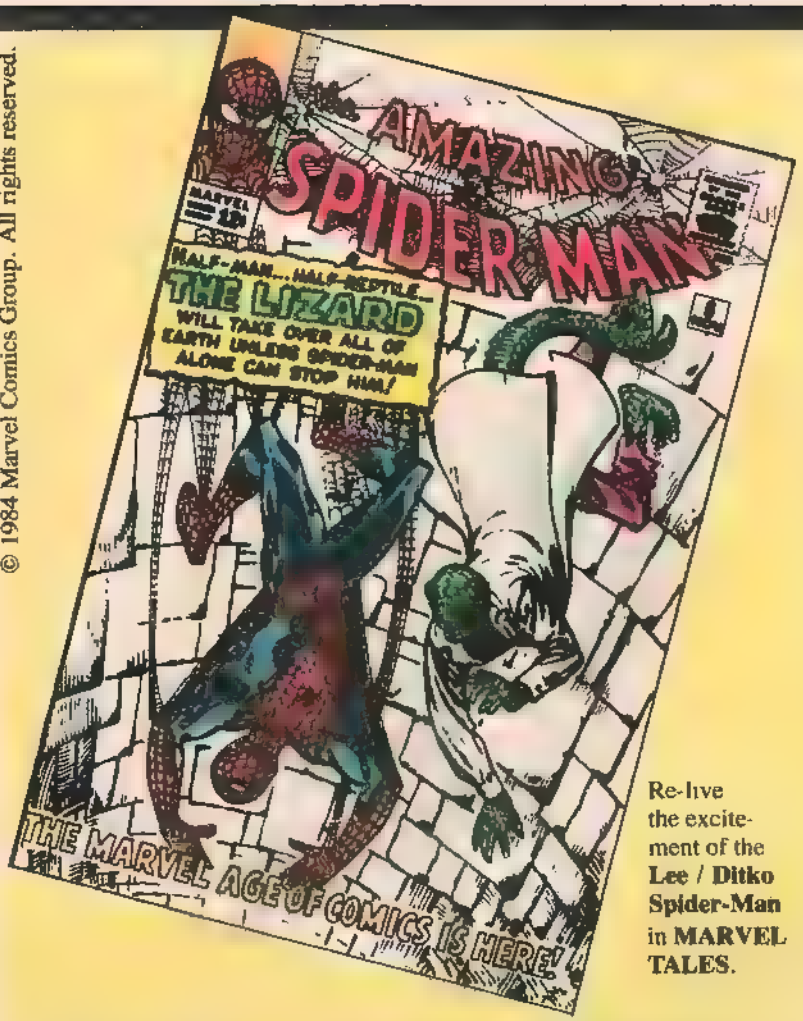
© 1984 Marvel Comics Group All rights reserved

The original **Iron Man** — another Marvel super hero who premiered in sixty-three. Later in that year, he donned his newer, higher-technology armor!

MAN #1 was published, giving the newly-acclaimed web-spinner his own magazine, while **Iron Man** debuted as the lead feature in **TALES OF SUSPENSE** #39, a magazine of the fantasy format we talked about last issue.

Spider-Man, who had debuted in the last issue of **AMAZING FANTASY** in 1962, became the object of popular demand. He got his own title six months after **AMAZING FANTASY** was cancelled. **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #1's cover displayed him in dramatic confrontation with the already popular **Fantastic Four**, while inside, the villainous **Chameleon** and supporting characters **J. Jonah Jameson** and his astronaut son **John**, first appeared Characterization and series tone were immediately established, and became strongly defined over the following months. Guilt-ridden **Peter Parker**, blaming himself for his **Uncle Ben's** murder, tried to launch a professional performing career as **Spider-Man**, only to have his public image wrecked by the slanderous editorial exposes of **J. Jonah Jameson** — whose own son **Spider-Man** had rescued from astronautical disaster in that first issue! Financial problems loomed over **Peter** and his Aunt May, until, in an ironic reprieve in issue #2, **Peter** landed work as a freelance photographer for **Jonah's** *Daily Bugle*, selling his exclusive pics of **Spider-Man's** battle with in-

© 1984 Marvel Comics Group. All rights reserved.


AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
MARVEL AGE
HALF-MAN...HALF-REPTILE...
THE LIZARD
WILL TAKE OVER ALL OF EARTH UNLESS SPIDER-MAN ALONE CAN STOP HIM!
THE MARVEL AGE OF COMICS IS HERE!

Re-live the excitement of the **Lee / Ditko Spider-Man** in **MARVEL TALES.**

credible adversaries.

Speaking of incredible adversaries . . . ! The original **Vulture**, and the terrible **Tinkerer**, first appear in **SPIDER-MAN** #2. **Dr. Octopus** made his entrance in issue #3, presenting **Spidey** with his first real trouncing — and a nasty case of self-doubt, before a speech by **the F.F.'s Johnny Storm** at Forest Hills High School restored **Pete's** confidence. In a return bout, the inexperienced young **Spider-Man** narrowly triumphed over **Doc Ock's** massive, strong arms and brilliant, though twisted, brain. Like **Spidey** himself, **Ock** received his powers as a result of an accident involving radioactivity, as did **Flint Marko, the Sandman**, whom **Spidey** met in issue #4. **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #4 also introduced **Pete's** romantic interests **Betty Brant**, who was **Jameson's** secretary, and **Liz Allen**, who further complicated the perennial problems **Peter** was having with his schoolmates. Issue #5 saw **Spidey** pitted against the deadly **Dr. Doom**, a foe against whom the wall-crawler could barely hold his own. In issue #6, **Spider-Man** first encountered the fascinating **Lizard**, and began a long and valued friendship with the vile swamp-denizen's alter-ego, **Dr. Curtis Connors**. **Spider-Man's** 1963 closed with the **Vulture's** return, a little "editorial reply" in which **Spidey** webbed **Jonah**, and a nice romantic encounter between **Pete** and **Betty**. The talents of illustrator **Steve Ditko** contributed immeasurable atmosphere, character, and action, to **Stan Lee's** scripts. If it seems as though we're overemphasizing **Spider-Man** in our review of 1963, rest assured that his importance to the Marvel Age of Comics easily merits the full mention we've given him here.

But the phenomenon of **Spider-Man's** first full year should not eclipse the dramatic origin of **Iron Man**! The March, 1963 issue of **TALES OF SUSPENSE** showed weapons genius **Tony Stark** wounded by an exploding booby trap in Viet Nam. Found by a guerilla tyrant named **Wong Chu**, **Stark** seemed destined to pass his final days designing weapons for **Wong Chu's** communist band, with a promise of life-saving surgery if he cooperated. **Stark** and a fellow prisoner, famous physicist **Professor Yinsen**, devised, out of scrap metal and available implements, a life-saving electromagnetic chest plate. The chest plate could exert a pull on the shrapnel near **Stark's** heart, and at the same time support an armored weapon system for **Stark** to use. The first, crude and heavy version of the **Iron Man** armor was then electrically charged, while **Yinsen** gave his life destroying the evil captors from the lab. **Iron Man** then defeated the Communist guerillas in his first mission!

Iron Man significantly developed over the next nine issues. In **TALES OF SUSPENSE** #40, **Stark** painted the armor gold, to make the suit look less frightening and more heroic. In **SUSPENSE** #41, the technological details of the armor, and the romantic side of **Tony Stark's** playboy personality, became better known. **SUSPENSE** #42 featured two more Communist villains, **the Red Barbarian** and **the Actor**. **Kala, Queen of the Netherworld** debuted in **SUSPENSE** #43. **The Mad Pharoah** and **Cleopatra** starred in #44's time travel story. **SUSPENSE** #45 was a landmark issue, introducing the second **Jack Frost**, later to be known as **Blizzard**, and **Tony Stark's** companions, **"Happy" Hogan** and **Virginia "Pepper" Potts**. **Happy** and **Pepper**, by the way, after a long and stormy relationship, would eventually marry. Issue #46 introduced the Russion answer to **Iron Man**, the original **Crimson Dynamo**, who soon turned against his Red masters and became a loyal employee of **Stark's**. **SUSPENSE** #47 introduced **the Melter**, and the year closed with a re-designed suit of lightweight armor, which **Stark** used to defeat the menace of **Mr. Doll**. Throughout the series, creative visions of weapon technology balanced **Stark's** dramatic dependence on his electromagnetic chest plate for his very life.

For the May release, newly-trademarked Marvel gave its frantic

fans a new kind of war magazine, **SGT. FURY AND HIS HOWLING COMMANDOES**. The first issue introduced **Nick Fury**, who would later become director of the espionage organization **S.H.I.E.L.D.**, and a famous cast of mixed ethnicity: **Timothy "Dum Dum" Dugan, Gabriel Jones, Dino Manelli, Robert "Rebel" Ralston, "Izzy" Cohen, Jonathan "Junior" Juniper**, who died in issue #4, and **Captain "Happy Sam" Sawyer. Stan Lee** and **Jack Kirby** combined humor and drama to create adventures tied to world-historical events and people. The first four issues of this series came out in 1963, and they were great!

Sadly, the original **INCREDIBLE HULK** series ended in 1963, cancelled with issue #6, cover-dated March. However, **the Hulk** soon became a most exciting maverick guest star in **FANTASTIC FOUR** #12, and went on to participate in the founding of one of *two* great super teams to premiere in 1963.

The first new super team, the mighty **Avengers**, premiered in **AVENGERS** #1, cover-dated September, 1963. The cast included **the Hulk, Thor, Ant-Man** and his partner **the Wasp**, and **Iron Man. The Hulk** went maverick again, though, and quit **the Avengers** in issue #2!

Also for September of 1963, **Lee** and **Kirby** created **the X-Men!** The original line-up of young mutant adventurers which appeared in **X-MEN** #1 was: **Cyclops, the Beast, Angel, Iceman**, and **Marvel Girl**, led by their telepathic mentor, **Professor Charles Xavier**. The first issue introduced the now legendary **Magneto**, and the second issue, the teleportational **Vanisher**.

In the group of fantasy titles that had just begun to feature super heroes in 1962, more exciting events transpired in '63. **JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY**, in addition to featuring **Thor** regularly, began carrying a second series, **Lee** and **Kirby's "Tales of Asgard,"** with issue #97. Thus was the mythological background of **Thor's** series augmented. Meanwhile, **TALES TO ASTONISH**, which had started featuring **Ant-Man's** partner, **the Wasp**, in issue #44. In this tale, **Henry Pym's** brilliant biochemistry transformed socialite **Janet Van Dyne** into a superadventuress with insectocellular implants, size changing gases, and a sting-augmented costume. **Ant-Man** improved upon his own capabilities in issue #49, when he became **Giant-Man** for the first time!

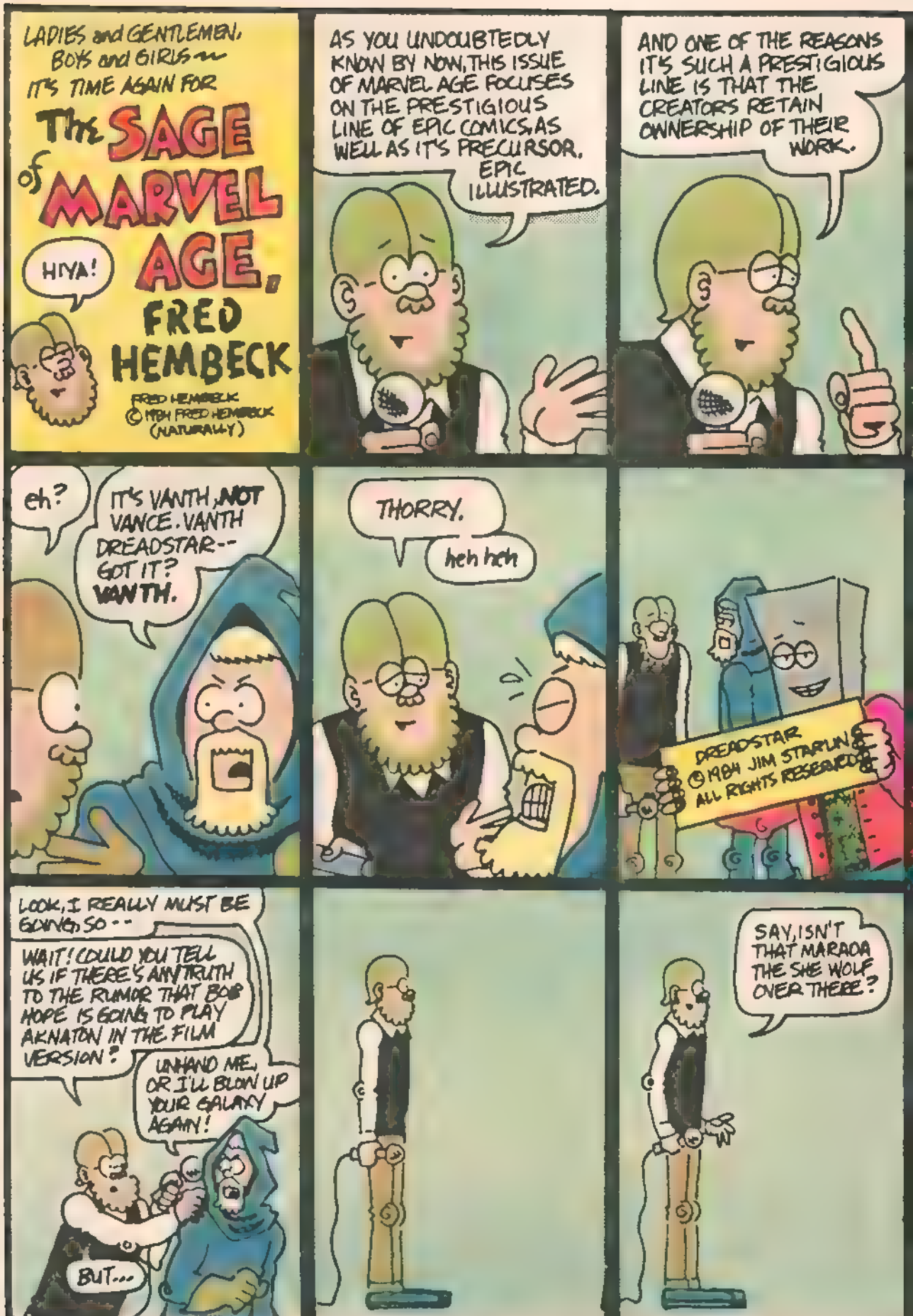
© 1984 Marvel Comics Group. All rights reserved.

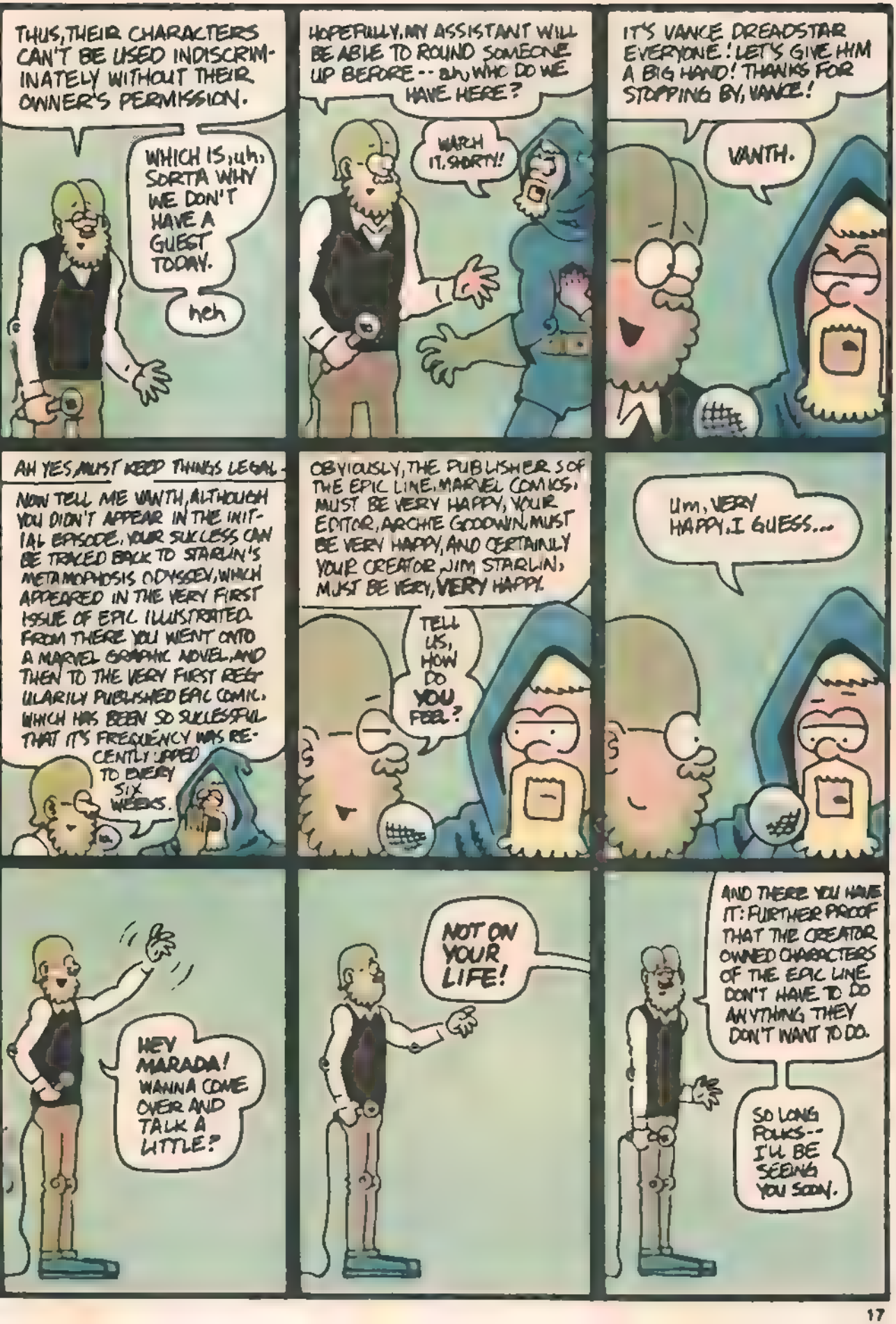
A great event occurred quietly and without fanfare in **STRANGE TALES** #110. **Lee** and **Ditko** introduced **Dr. Strange**, master of the mystic arts, in combat with his nocturnal nemesis **Nightmare**. The landmark story also introduced **Strange's** mentor, **the Ancient One**, then referred to only as **the Master**, and **Strange's** faithful man-servant, **Wong**. Next issue, one of **Strange's** greatest foes, **Baron Mordo**, appeared. But **Mordo's** precise relationship to **Strange** and **the Ancient One** did not become completely clear until we learned **Dr. Strange's** origin, in **STRANGE TALES** #115.

The lead feature in **STRANGE TALES** continued to be the solo adventures of the **Fantastic Four's** youngest member, **Johnny Storm, the Human Torch. Torch** kept amply busy between his own adventures and the many uncanny episodes the **F.F.** experienced in their own title in 1963. Suffice it to say that new menaces included **The Red Ghost** and his **Super Apes, the Mad Thinker** and his **Android**, the **Super-Skrull, Rama-Tut**, also known as **Kang**, the original **Molecule Man**, and the original **Hate Monger**!

Finally, **Uatu the Watcher** was introduced in 1963, in **FANTASTIC FOUR** #13, helping to make 1963 a year truly worth watching! It was a year of outstanding developments, exciting and mysterious, retaining the indescribably weird quality of the pre-hero period, while identifying a solid line of magazines that would change the world of heroic fiction forever! Through the enthusiasm of a small but growing, intelligent and hard-core fandom, Marvel Comics continued to take over the world at large. That little terrier dog was becoming something with which to reckon!

Next issue: 1964!


LADIES and GENTLEMEN, BOYS and GIRLS — IT'S TIME AGAIN FOR
The SAGE of MARVEL AGE.
FRED HEMBECK
HIYA!
FRED HEMBECK © MCMLXXXIV FRED HEMBECK (NATURALLY)
AS YOU UNDOUBTEDLY KNOW BY NOW, THIS ISSUE OF MARVEL AGE FOCUSES ON THE PRESTIGIOUS LINE OF EPIC COMICS, AS WELL AS IT'S PRECURSOR, EPIC ILLUSTRATED.
AND ONE OF THE REASONS IT'S SUCH A PRESTIGIOUS LINE IS THAT THE CREATORS RETAIN OWNERSHIP OF THEIR WORK.
eh?
IT'S VANTH, NOT VANCE. VANTH DREADSTAR -- GOT IT? VANTH.
THORRY.
heh heh
DREADSTAR © MCMLXXXIV JIM STARLIN ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
LOOK, I REALLY MUST BE GOING, SO --
WAIT! COULD YOU TELL US IF THERE'S ANY TRUTH TO THE RUMOR THAT BOB HOPE IS GOING TO PLAY AKNATON IN THE FILM VERSION?
UNHAND ME, OR I'LL BLOW UP YOUR GALAXY AGAIN!
BUT...
SAY, ISN'T THAT MARADA THE SHE WOLF OVER THERE?


THUS, THEIR CHARACTERS CAN'T BE USED INDISCRIMINATELY WITHOUT THEIR OWNER'S PERMISSION.
WHICH IS, uh, SORTA WHY WE DON'T HAVE A GUEST TODAY.
heh
HOPEFULLY, MY ASSISTANT WILL BE ABLE TO ROUND SOMEONE UP BEFORE -- oh, WHO DO WE HAVE HERE?
WATCH IT, SHORTY!
IT'S VANCE DREADSTAR EVERYONE! LET'S GIVE HIM A BIG HAND! THANKS FOR STOPPING BY, VANCE!
VANTH.
AH YES, MUST KEEP THINGS LEGAL.
NOW TELL ME VANTH, ALTHOUGH YOU DIDN'T APPEAR IN THE INITIAL EPISODE, YOUR SUCCESS CAN BE TRACED BACK TO STARLIN'S METAMORPHOSIS ODYSSEY, WHICH APPEARED IN THE VERY FIRST ISSUE OF EPIC ILLUSTRATED. FROM THERE YOU WENT ONTO A MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL, AND THEN TO THE VERY FIRST REGULARLY PUBLISHED EPIC COMIC, WHICH HAS BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL THAT IT'S FREQUENCY WAS RECENTLY UPPED TO EVERY SIX WEEKS.
OBVIOUSLY, THE PUBLISHERS OF THE EPIC LINE, MARVEL COMICS, MUST BE VERY HAPPY, YOUR EDITOR, ARCHIE GOODWIN, MUST BE VERY HAPPY, AND CERTAINLY YOUR CREATOR, JIM STARLIN, MUST BE VERY, VERY HAPPY.
TELL US, HOW DO YOU FEEL?
Um, VERY HAPPY, I GUESS...
HEY MARADA! WANNA COME OVER AND TALK A LITTLE?
NOT ON YOUR LIFE!
AND THERE YOU HAVE IT: FURTHER PROOF THAT THE CREATOR OWNED CHARACTERS OF THE EPIC LINE DON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING THEY DON'T WANT TO DO.
SO LONG FOLKS -- I'LL BE SEEING YOU SOON.

MARVEL AGE™ Talks to ARCHIE GOODWIN

by **Mark Lerer**

It wasn't easy to get **Archie Goodwin** to agree to an interview for **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**. But we persevered. Since **Archie's** spent most of his adult life writing and editing far-reaching fantasy and science fiction tales for all sorts of comics publishers, we figured that he must have a wild, secret side. In the office, **Archie** comes across as a shy, well-mannered, soft-spoken gentleman — so we just *knew* that in real life, he had to be a strange, creative madman who cavorted with barbarians, wizards, and robots!

Well, we finally got ahold of him. And you know something? He *is* a shy, well-mannered, soft-spoken gentleman! **Archie Goodwin**, editor of **EPIC ILLUSTRATED**, is a perfectly normal guy, and he wasn't ashamed to tell us so.

Who are you in your fantasy life?

Believe it or not, my secret fantasy is to be a comic book writer and editor! Since I was twenty-six and began working in this field, I've been *living* my secret, fantasy life!

Oh, come on!

Nope. Seriously, perhaps I'm different from most people in the comics field, but I don't want to be a sword-wielding barbarian, or be **Luke Skywalker**. My imaginative impulses all come out in my work. Oh, sure I have those day-to-day, practical fantasies that everybody has — if there's an obnoxious guy walking down the street with one of those loud blasting radios, sometimes I'll imagine I'm **Clint Eastwood** and take out my magnum and blast the radio to smithereens. But that's about

The artwork accompanying this interview is selected from upcoming issues of **EPIC ILLUSTRATED**. Feast your eyes!

Archie Goodwin © 1984 by Archie Goodwin. All rights reserved.

Toadswart © 1984 by Tim Conrad. All rights reserved.

'Lesson of Time' © 1984 Lela Dowling. All rights reserved

the extent of it. My life as Epic editorial director, residing in Manhattan with my wife, **Anne Murphy**, my daughter **Jeny** and son **Seth**, is all the secret life I need

What do you like to do when you're not editing comics?

Oh, like everyone else, really. I enjoy reading, especially mysteries and suspense fiction. Right now, I'm really enjoying **Elmore Leonard**, a novelist who writes real hardboiled detective thrillers, usually set in Detroit or Florida. I go on reading binges occasionally — I'll go on a science fiction kick for a few months, and then stop when it gets to be too much like what I do in the office. For someone in my line of work, reading science fiction for entertainment can sometimes be difficult — if often winds up being research

I like movies, but it's hard to think of any that really thrilled me recently Oh, yes, I did like *Diner*. That was a movie about people growing up in an era which came right after the period when I came of age, and I could relate to those characters It was a very human picture, very entertaining, and I enjoyed the ensemble performance tremendously.

I enjoyed the *Conan* movie, but with some reservations. Before I saw it, my biggest fear was that it would be "campy" and ridiculous. But having seen it, I think they went too far in the other direction! I found it too solemn, *too* straight. I would have liked to see a bit more of a romp. An adventure starring **Conan** should have a lot of lusty fun to it, and I feel that element got lost

***EPIC ILLUSTRATED** is the Marvel magazine of fantasy and science fiction. Now we all know what constitutes a science fiction story. How would you define the genre of "fantasy"?*

People spend hours arguing this one. You can define fantasy by what it *isn't* — science fiction involves a scientific or sociological premise and an extrapolation — a "what if." Fantasy, on the other hand, usually involves non-scientific elements. Whatever explores the imagination — magic, demons, mystical beings — is in the realm of fantasy. I've always considered sword and sorcery to be a subdivision of what we call fantasy

People's desire to read fantasy stories as adults probably comes from the same thrill that fairy tales provide children. Fantasy may be defined as the version of fairy tales that suits us as adults. It's interesting — the best fairy tales, for example, the famous Grimm's fairy tales which have stayed in our literature to the present day, always seem to have a dark side to them. You know, children threatened by witches, dragons breathing fire, and frightening, terrifying danger. Perhaps fairy tales, and fantasy stories, explore for our imaginations the things we're afraid to face head on in real life

EPIC ILLUSTRATED is called the Marvel magazine of fantasy *and* science fiction, because we include subjects from all over the range of imaginative fiction. Most of our contributors lean toward fantasy, but every few years or so, someone'll become tired of drawing creatures and magical beings, and they'll take a crack at doing hardware and machinery and so forth! Every generation of writers and artists is different, and their creative preferences often seem to go in cycles.

*How is **EPIC ILLUSTRATED** different from the other leading magazine of fantasy and science fiction, HEAVY METAL?*

We feature a larger selection of talent from the United States, especially a lot of wonderful creators who've never been published before. We express a different point of view toward our subject. You'll find the art in **EPIC** to be more in the service of a story, an idea, or a theme. We place a greater emphasis on having the picture say something, and that makes **EPIC** very much a Marvel magazine.

As editor, what do you look for most in a contributor's work?

An editor of an anthology magazine like **EPIC ILLUSTRATED** appreciates a totality of vision in a creative piece. Let me explain. If I were the editor of, say, **SPIDER-MAN**, or one of the regular line of Marvel Comics, the first things I'd look for might be a good grasp of the characters and a solid plot. But **EPIC ILLUSTRATED** features both the more traditional type of

story, and also more "abstract" kinds of work, pieces that aren't in the form of traditional stories. In an issue of **EPIC**, you might find a visual poem, a vignette, a character sketch, or a more experimental and unorthodox use of the comics medium. You can't always judge such pieces by the traditional criteria. So I really look for what I call a totality of vision, a clear point of view imaginatively expressed. I look to see if the creator is realizing something unique in an interesting way.

What do you go by?

In general, I use the **Harry Cohn** system.

The who?

Harry Cohn was the head producer for Columbia pictures during the era of the **Frank Capra** movies. He had the "seat of the pants" system. He'd look at a new picture or see a budding new talent perform, and if he squirmed in his seat, it was out! If he didn't squirm, chances were that he liked what he saw! You just rely on your intuitive, gut feeling.

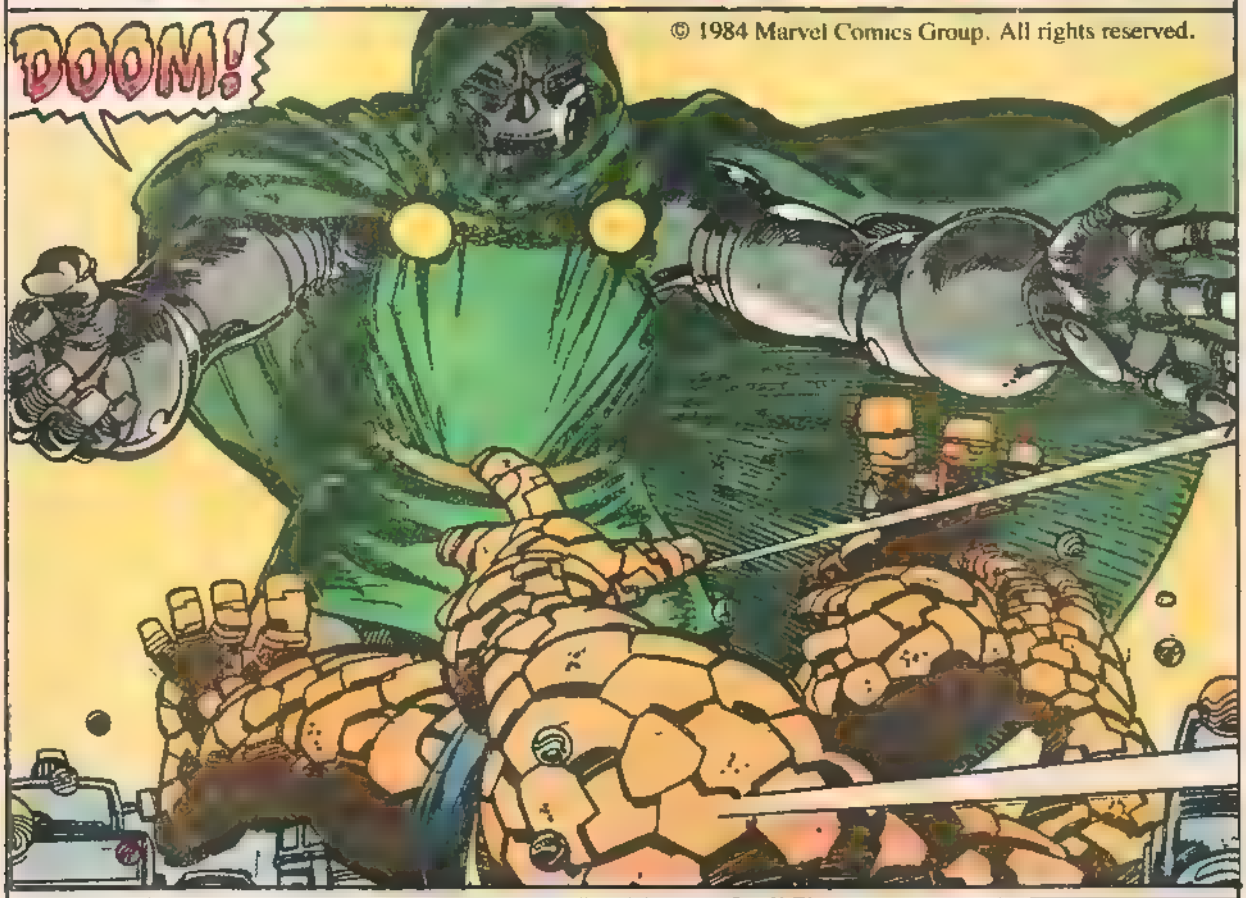
*What sort of person is the **EPIC** reader?*

You know, it's hard to say who the typical **EPIC** reader is. On the one hand, I'd say he's a male between the ages of fifteen and twenty five — but we get so much mail from males *and* females of *all* ages, that my first guess might not be accurate. Likewise, I'd be tempted to say that about half our readers are comics fans — but again, many, many people write us who aren't familiar with Marvel comics. There are a vociferous number of fantasy and science fiction enthusiasts who buy **EPIC** purely for its subject matter.

In all, I'd say that the readership of the Marvel magazine of fantasy and science fiction is a broader mix of people than anyone would first suspect. And it's a mix that's growing broader, bigger, and more enthusiastic with every issue!

"The Girl in the Crystal Cube" © 1984 Pepe Moreno. All rights reserved.

Spotlight on MARVEL FANFARE™



© 1984 Marvel Comics Group. All rights reserved.

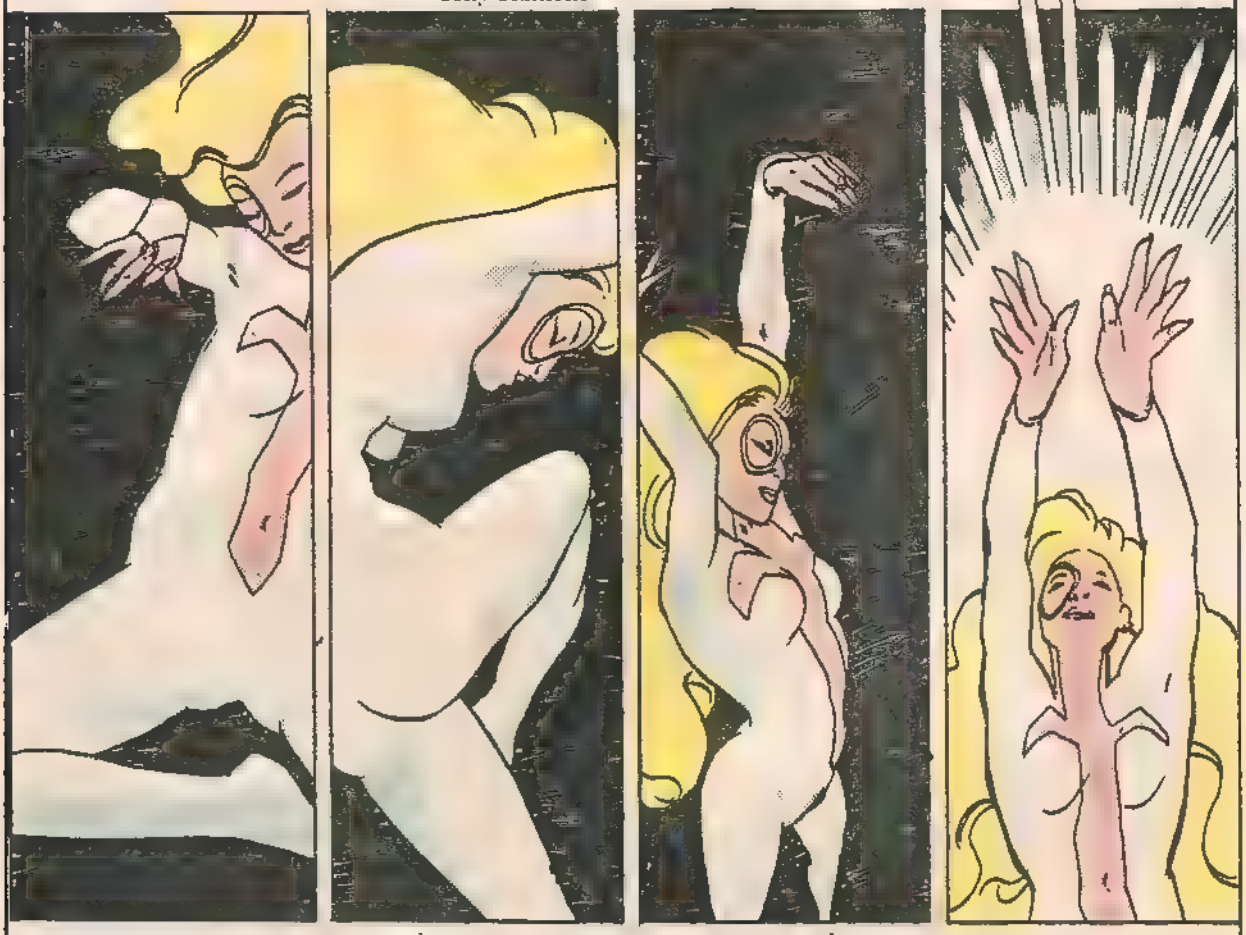
by **Sandy Hausler** and **Mark Lerer**

Marvel's prestige book, **MARVEL FANFARE**, starts with Marvel's prestige editor, **Al Milgrom**! He selects, suggests, commissions, cajoles, and commands the storehouse of talent that is the Marvel Comics Group, to package this bimonthly smorgasbord of comic art entertainment. The result? Every two months, **FANFARE** presents the broadest assortment of styles and subjects available between two covers.

"It all began," **Al** recalls, "with Editor in Chief **Jim Shooter**. One day, **Jim** and I were speculating about the possibilities of producing a comic magazine with less advertising and more room for content. I suggested launching a title with no ads at all, in a high-quality package. Something that we might have to charge a little bit more for, but that the well-read comic fan would like. After several weeks of planning, **MARVEL FANFARE** came into the world!"

When **FANFARE** first began, **Al** filled its pages with what's called "inventory" material — stories that had already been assigned and in some cases written and drawn, but not immediately scheduled for publication. One of **Al's** first choices for the new magazine, for instance, was a tale starring **Spider-Man**, **Ka-Zar**,

The mysterious **Dagger**, from an upcoming **Cloak and Dagger** story, by **Tony Salmons**



© 1984 Marvel Comics Group. All rights reserved.

and **the X-Men** that he'd originally commissioned for **MARVEL TEAM-UP**. The story, written by **Chris Claremont** and illustrated by **Michael Golden**, was so beautifully done that **Al** wanted it to be part of the embryonic **FANFARE**. While assembling the first few issues of the fledgling magazine, **Al** became the office scavenger, searching throughout the Bullpen for material that deserved to be published but had not yet found a home.

The recently-concluded four-part **Black Widow** adventure that appeared in **FANFARE's** pages has an interesting history. Here's an example of how troublesome editing the new magazine could become. Written by **Ralph Macchio** and penciled by **George Perez**, the tale was originally a three-parter. The time lapse between the writing of the story and its eventual publication made an extra part necessary to give the new Marvel reader background on the character **Al** had to find an artist to draw the background segment. He assigned the task to **Bob Layton**. **Al** thought all would go smoothly — until he found out that **Bob** could only pencil two of a required ten pages! Fortunately, **Luke McDonnell** could pencil the remaining eight pages, and **Brett Breeding** came in to ink the new section. **Brett** then inked the **Perez** pencils for the first chapter of the story. This was what appeared in **FANFARE** #10. The next part of the story, seen in **FANFARE** #11, had already been inked several years earlier by **Jack Abel** and **Joe Sinnott**. **Al's** headaches weren't over, though — deadline approached on **FANFARE** #12, and he couldn't find an inker for chapter three! He searched diligently, but everyone asked had a prior committment! So determined was **Al** to see the story in print that he sat down and inked it himself! **John Beatty** then began inking the final segment of the story, but he couldn't finish it . . . so **Brett Breeding** once again saved the day! Despite all the worries and anxieties about getting the whole thing done, the final product was a resounding success. A great story that might otherwise have never seen the light of day appeared through the efforts of **Al Milgrom** and his amazing **MARVEL FANFARE** — and a thrilling character, **the Black Widow**, was introduced to a whole new generation of readers!

As **FANFARE** caught on, sources for material became more plentiful. Remember the **Jungle Book** adaptation from **FANFARE** #10-12? While poking through the office, **Al** discovered that **Roy Thomas** had conceived a "**Wolf Boy**" series, to be drawn by **Gil Kane**, for a black and white magazine. Apparently, when Marvel had cancelled that particular magazine, the project wound up on the shelf. **Al** rescued this unusual and fine material from oblivion. He had no trouble convincing **Craig Russell** to ink **Gil Kane's** pen-

cils. **Gil** had already scripted the first chapter, and **Jo Duffy** volunteered to write the final two chapters. Once again, a rare piece of comic art made its way into print, thanks to the existence of **MARVEL FANFARE**.

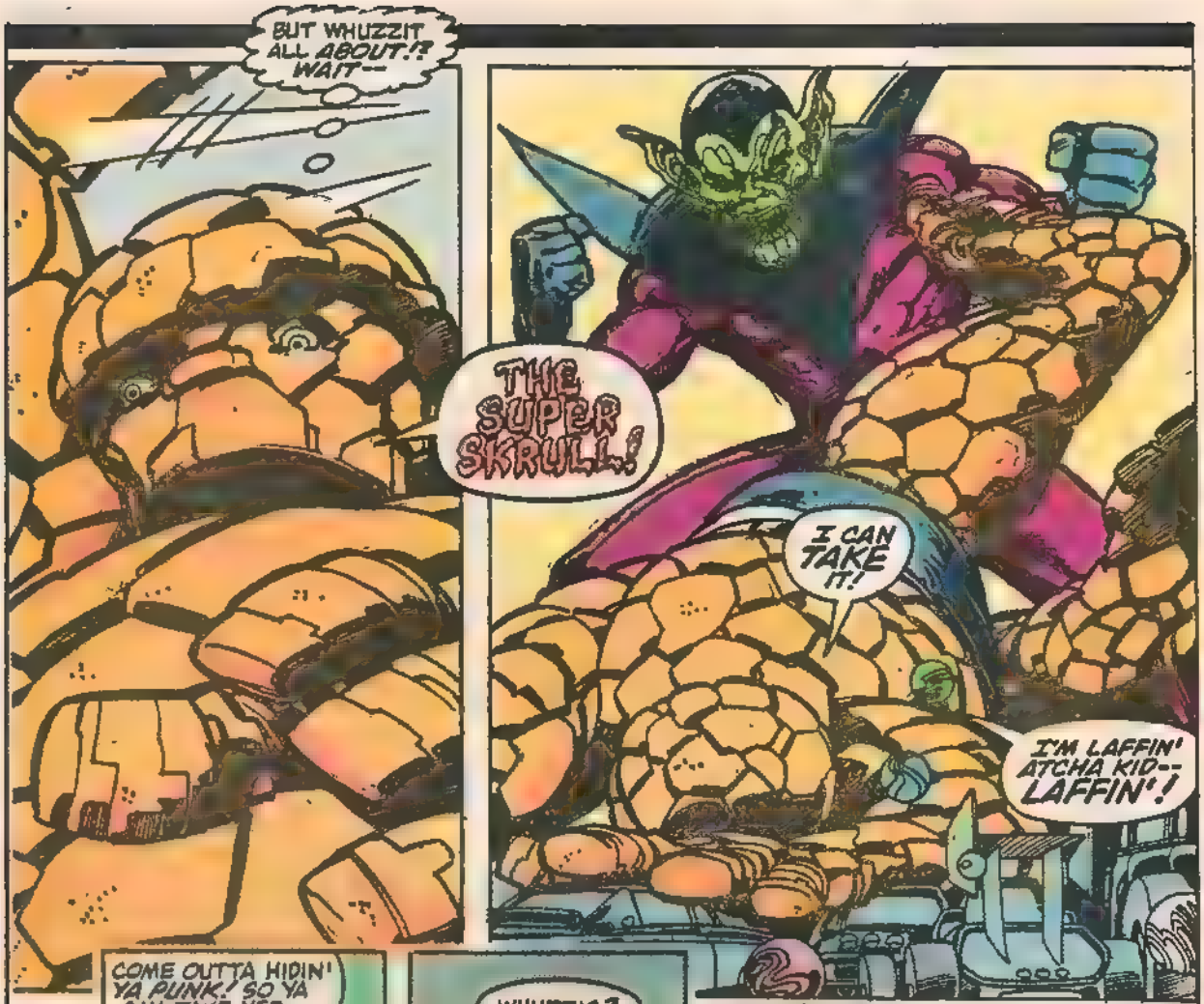
These days, **Al** makes it his policy to commission new material for **MARVEL FANFARE** whenever possible. Confides **Al**, "It's like playing mental comic book chess. Like any fan, I often daydream about seeing my favorite inker ink my favorite penciler, or having a certain creative team do their version of my favorite character." With **MARVEL FANFARE**, daydreams can happen! For example, ever want to see **Craig Russell** ink **Mike Ploog's** pencils? You'll see it this year, in an all-new **Weirdworld** story! Another treat — **Barry Windsor-Smith**! **Al** simply had heard that after a long absence, **Barry** wanted to return to drawing comics. **Al** asked **Barry** if he'd want to do something — anything! — for **MARVEL FANFARE**! **Barry** told him about an idea he's been mulling over for a solo **Thing** story . . . and you can see the result in **MARVEL FANFARE** #15, coming this spring! It's a wonderful piece of storytelling . . . and the kind of thing that just couldn't appear in any other Marvel title. When you read it, you'll know why.

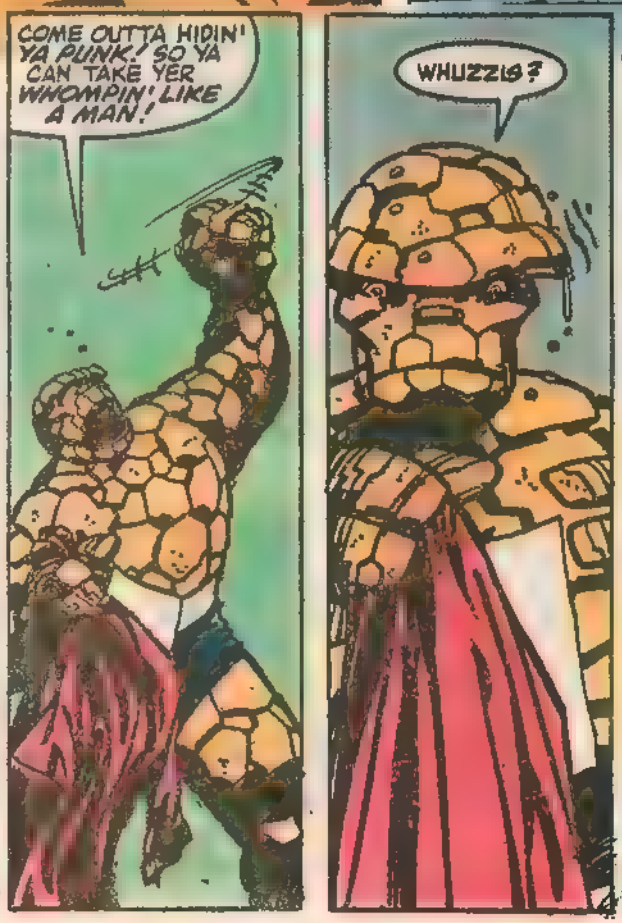
Where does **Al** get ideas for what particular kinds of material to commission for **MARVEL FANFARE**? From the readers! The mail that **MARVEL FANFARE** receives has a more immediate impact on editorial policy than that of most comic books published today. Letters to **FANFARE** are vehement and varied. There are sharp differences between the readers. Some want only to see super hero stories. **Al** asserts that features like "**Jungle Book**" have changed people's minds, though, and more and more fans want to see a variety of types of subject matter. The typical **FANFARE** reader — if there is such a thing — goes for something different and unique. No other group of readers seems to enjoy experimental plotlines as much. **Bill Mantlo** and **George Freeman's** offbeat **Daredevil** adventure, for example, got a tremendous response, as did **Steven Grant's Hulk** story, which explored the touching friendship between those two old villains **Unus** and **the Blob**. The single most controversial feature, though, that **FANFARE** runs, has to be the *portfolio* section! These portfolios often show highly unusual interpretations of Marvel's best-loved stars – no wonder they get a strong reaction, issue after issue!

Future **FANFARE** features will reflect **Al's** committment to diversity. **Chris Claremont** and **Bill Mantlo** have collaborated on an **Angel** adventure, to be drawn by **Brett Blevins**. **Jim Starlin** is working on a **Hulk**-versus-**Thing** two part slugfest. **Spider-Man** and **the Hulk** will team up in a story written by **Bill Mantlo** and drawn by **Michael Golden**. **Cloak and Dagger** will appear, too, in a tale totally unlike any of their previous appearances.

Cloak, from the soon-to-be appearing tale, by **Tony Salmons**.

© 1984 Marvel Comics Group. All rights reserved.

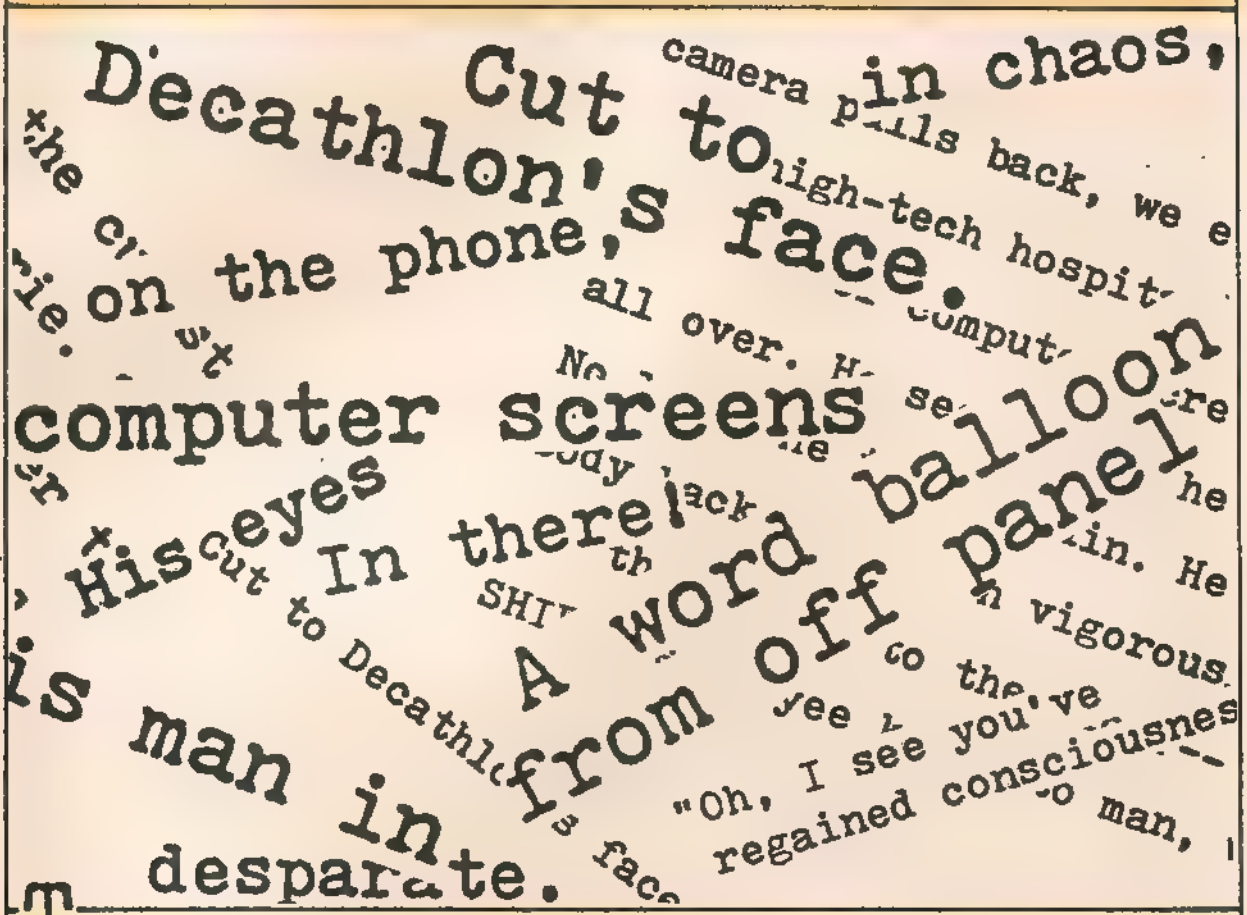




Yup, **FANFARE** is **Al Milgrom's** baby. He loves putting the magazine together, and **FANFARE's** loyal and vociferous following are certainly his partners in determining what kinds of stories get published. It's a unique situation. "It's kinda nice being able to have the editorial voice be inside a word balloon," concluded **Al**. "Where else in comics can you get to do that? And where else can you get to run over **Jim Shooter** with a truck?"

© 1984 Marvel Comics Group All rights reserved.

THE NEW TALENT DEPARTMENT



This month's new talent department features the work of a regular contributor to **MARVEL AGE**, **Mark Lerer**. In addition to his work for **MARVEL AGE**, **Mark** is trying to break into the business as a "real" writer — and we thought his experience of working on a story with Editor in Chief **Jim Shooter** would be helpful to our readers who want to learn the basics of plotting a super hero tale! Take it away, **Mark**!

Thank you. Like so many starting writers, my first plot was about a character I created myself, who I thought could be the next great Marvel superstar. Basically, he's an Olympic athlete who acquired super powers somewhat against his will. His name, I thought, was a natural . . . **Decathlon**! So I wrote up a very tight, highly detailed synopsis about the origin of **Decathlon**, and how he tried to use his super powers to join the **Avengers**!

Jim looked my plot over, and said he liked it, but there were changes that had to be made. He said, too, that *if* we could get my plot into shape — meaning that the quality of the story, the pacing, the characters' motivations, and the conflict had to be up to the standards of any other professional writer — he'd pay me for it — *real money!* — and place the plot in his inventory. Now, I'm not gonna print the whole plot here in **MARVEL AGE**, because it'll take up too much room. But I'll begin by showing some of the key passages of the story, and **Jim's** editorial comments.

Our story opens with Captain America signing autographs in Central Park. Suddenly, his attention is diverted by a costumed character who introduces himself as Decathlon. Decathlon engages Cap in hand to hand combat, and of course, Captain America subdues him. Cap asks what he wants, and Decathlon responds — he wants to become an Avenger, and that he wanted to prove himself in battle.

Jim told me first off that this opening just wouldn't do. "But," I protested, "having the new character show up and fight an established character to prove himself in battle is a standard device!"

"Exactly. That's why we *can't* use it. Marvel's the innovator. Let the other companies use standard plot devices. This one has become cliche. I don't want my writers taking old devices and re-hashing them. Come up with something new.

"Besides," **Jim** continued. "It would be a lot more realistic to have the new character just show up and shake **Cap's** hand, or come to **Avengers** mansion and introduce himself in a civilized manner. After all, if *you* had super powers and you wanted to join the **Avengers**, don't you think you'd do better to go about applying nicely instead of trying to pummel **Cap**?"

I told **Jim** that I thought the idea of this battle would be more *visually* exciting than having **Decathlon** just show up and shake **Cap's** hand. But

Jim cleared up this misconception — and told me something very instructive.

"A lot of starting writers find themselves choosing between a scene that's more realistic and what they think is more 'visual.' But 'visual' isn't necessarily a battle. 'Visual' isn't necessarily having people crush bricks. Think of the great comics stories you read as a kid — think of those old **Stan Lee / Jack Kirby Captain America** stories. Some of the greatest visuals were simply the interior shots that told you everything about the room in one picture. Or something crucial lying on a desk. 'Visual' means *show* the story, don't just *tell* about it."

Jim continued. "This is as important for writers to know as it is for artists. Each panel, each shot, should show something happening that advances the story." Before helping me figure out how to re-write the opening sequence, **Jim** pointed to a passage of the plot that happens later on:

Nick Fury and Decathlon are inside SHIELD headquarters. Fury explains to Decathlon his motive for bringing him to SHIELD. Fury says he might be able to get Decathlon Avengers membership in exchange for information. Decathlon, wishing to keep his secrets, pretends not to know what Fury is talking about. When pressed, he admits who he is.

I saw how this scene could be made stronger. So I re-wrote that scene thus:

Nick Fury and Decathlon are inside SHIELD headquarters. Fury takes out photographs. Decathlon — reaction shot. Fury surprises him — shows him reel-to-reel tape. Decathlon heads for the door. Door slams shut automatically. Decathlon trapped. Fury puts the tape in the machine. Decathlon in tears, smashes tape recorder, turns it off. Decathlon rips off his mask, revealing his face.

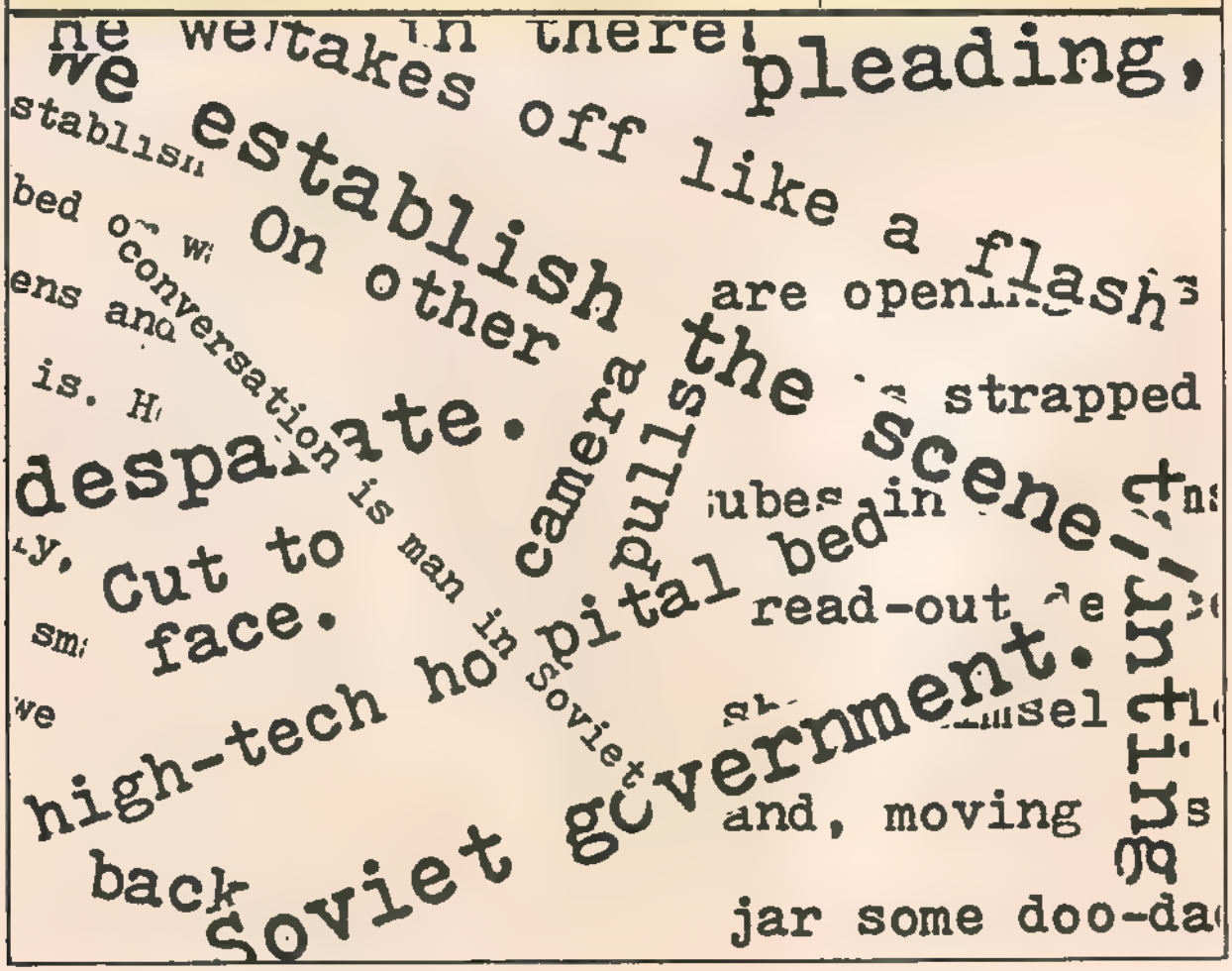
"Yeah, that's a little better," **Jim** offered. "You've got the idea. *Show* the action. Now, for the opening, you'll have to come up with something realistic and plausible, and show it in a visually interesting way. And get rid of all your 'talking heads' scenes — scenes where one character simply explains what's going on to another character. As far as the craft of storytelling goes, that's one way to polish up your technique

"Also, when you're writing plots, use 'short strokes.' You don't have to write a novel. The plot isn't for presentation — it's to get the ideas across. Now go back to work on this thing and I'll see you next week!"

Already I had many ideas about how to make my story better — so I went home and went back to work on it. But many, many more changes had to be made — and I had even *still* farther to go before I'd get the story into acceptable shape.

Next month in this column, I'll tell about the plot's re-write, and **Jim's** guidelines for story structure, establishing the conflict, and building a climax and resolution.

See you then! ●



Bullpen Bulletins

I GOT THIS LETTER . . .

a while back. It's from *Herb Trimpe* who's been a top Marvel artist since Tutankhamon wore diapers. High-flyin' Herb pilots his very own plane — a nifty-looking open-cockpit biplane — around the country in his spare time, by the way. Here's his letter

Dear Jim,

I thought you might get a bang out of this. We went to the beach (Delaware shore) for vacation this summer. There's a nice little airport down there at a place called Rehobeth. As we've done the past two years, Linda takes the girls in the car and I fly Alex down in the plane. To make a real long story short(er), Alex and I ran afoul of some weather (not in the forecast), and got hemmed in by thunderstorms and low visibility along the Delaware River. There was no airport around where I could conveniently set down, so I chose the only possible out, with the rain coming down and the lightning flashing about, we landed in a farmer's soybean field. Just in time, too, as the wind and rain swept through the area. Lines went down, lights went out, branches were felled, the whole bit. Anyway, as we swung around into wind to get everything tied down, we were greeted by this local farmer and his family. Drenched, we were invited inside for dinner, and the rest is history. The whole thing was like something out of "The Great Waldo Pepper." Linda drove up to get us and the next day we drove back to fly the airplane out. If you ever got a spare half hour, I'll tell you about that one, too. Short fields and power lines, etc. Anyway, the upshot, the punch line, the payoff to this episode was that this family's name was *Marvel*. That's right, the farmer's name is *Ray Marvel*. Small world, ain't it?

Best to all,
Herb

AND NOW A WORD FROM VIRGINIA . . . Virginia Romita, that is. Virginia is our Traffic Manager, responsible for keeping Marvel Comics on time — which she does amazingly well. It's not easy though, believe me. A few days ago, I heard her grumbling, snarling and cursing various Marvel editors' ancestors as she lugged her huge schedule book down the hall. "Virginia," I said, "you've got to *vent* this anger! Write it down! I'll print what you write on the Bullpen Page for the world to see! It'll make you feel better . . . and save me some writing."

She agreed — and so, it gives me great pleasure to present:

Virginia Romita's Rostrum

Let me introduce myself. My name is Virginia Romita. I keep the schedules and traffic moving at Marvel Comics. I have a meeting with the editors and their assistants every week and chart the progress of their books. I don't expect much from them — just perfection. They don't miss the mark too often considering the problems they have to meet and solve. I like due dates on all books to be met and kept. They in turn try to meet them and keep the quality of the books as well — no easy task I assure you. Consider all the obstacles. For example, one artist's cat fell out the window not once, but on three separate occasions forcing him to miss his due date each time. One writer had the misfortune of having a bird build its nest outside his bedroom window — the constant chirping kept him from sleeping, therefore unable to write — another due date missed. You'd be amazed how many portfolios are lost or stolen on the subway, how often lack of supplies, births human or animal, 24 hour nervous breakdowns, cause delays. I am. If we ran a contest on the most imaginative excuse given for missing a deadline, we'd be hard pressed picking a winner. Despite the never ending catastrophes, the editorial staff does a terrific job. Or else! They put out great comics and (almost) always on time.

I can't close this article down without mentioning the JR's (John Romitas) in my life.

John Sr. who used to draw Spider-Man, was not one for being late — but at what price. Way back when I was waiting to be driven to the hospital on John Jr.'s impending birth, Sr. asked if he had enough time to finish up the comic page he was working on. I guess he never thought of making up some story for not turning it in. He should have consulted with his friend the late Bill Everett, creator of Submariner. Bill was a creative genius. Once, when he missed a deadline, he claimed that his pet hamster ate through 6 pages of finished penciled pages (and never got indigestion). Now, no one could have made that up — or could they? Obviously, his hamster did not approve of comics as an art form.

You know, I was so concerned about getting this thing started I forgot it was going to need an end. I feel like the actor with stage fright, but when he got on stage did not want to leave. The only way seems to be to tell you I've enjoyed talking to you.

Virginia

HYPE BOX

ALIEN LEGION #1 — We've been showing little hints and glimpses over the past few months, but now we're ready to unveil it at last — Marvel's latest groundbreaking comic! CARL POTTS, ALAN ZELENETZ, FRANK CIROCCO, and TERRY AUSTIN have pooled their mighty talents to produce the most offbeat series of the year, featuring a veritable army of the most bizarre, colorful, and intriguing alien creatures ever to grace a comic page. It's destined to be the talk of fandom — so pick it up, or you'll be left out of a lot of conversations!

GRAPHIC NOVEL #10 — RICK VEITCH wrote and drew this daringly different science fiction adventure tale. Set on a far distant earth colony where people worship "The Sponsor," it stars a guy by the name of Sunoco Firestone. It's an outer space love story with commercial interruptions! And if you want to find out just what that means, you'll have to pick up the novel, won't you?

THIS JUST IN . . .

If you're a fan of computer adventure games, you'll be pleased to hear that Marvel Comics is teaming up with *Adventure International*, the leading computer games company, to do a series of games involving Marvel characters. Scott Adams, the famous game designer who heads up A.I., has had extensive meetings with myself, John Byrne and Bob Budiansky to make sure the games are true to the Marvel Universe. And if you're a fan of Marvel Comics, you'll also be pleased to hear that we'll be publishing comics based upon the games! Keep watching.

PRICE INCREASE?

No, not in the foreseeable future! Thanks to you people buying a *lot* of comics, we're able to hold the line! We appreciate your enthusiastic support, and in return, we're doing our best to keep prices where you want 'em — as low as possible!

Best,

Jim Shooter

CHECK LIST

THE THING #12
DAREDEVIL #207
NEW MUTANTS #16
KA-ZAR #32
DR. STRANGE CLASSICS #4 — Representing more of the LEE / DITKO classics of sorcery, from **Strange Tales #139-141**
☐ **MARVEL SUPER HEROES SECRET WARS (Limited Series) #2**
☐ **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #253**
☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #294**
☐ **THOR #344**
☐ **INDIANA JONES #16**
☐ **DR. STRANGE #65**
☐ **U.S. 1 (Limited Series) #10**
☐ **INCREDIBLE HULK #296**
☐ **AVENGERS #244**

CONAN THE BARBARIAN #159
MARVEL TALES #164 — Reprinting The Man in the Crime-Master's Mask by STAN LEE and STEVE DITKO from **Amazing Spider-Man #26**
X-MEN #162
ROM #55
POWER MAN IRON FIST #106
☐ **G.I. JOE #24**
FANTASTIC FOUR #267
MARVEL TEAM-UP #142 — Featuring **Spider-Man** and **Captain Marvel**
IRON MAN #183
PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #91
☐ **DEFENDERS #132**
☐ **STAR WARS #84**
ALPHA FLIGHT #11

HERCULES (Limited Series) #4
WHAT IF #45 — What If the Hulk Went Berserk?

MARVEL MAGAZINES

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #100 — Special anniversary issue.
☐ **MARVEL AGE #15**

EPIC COMICS

ALIEN LEGION #1 — The debut of a thrilling new series. See Hype Box
☐ **DREADSTAR #10**

GRAPHIC NOVELS

#10 HEARTBURST — See Hype Box

THE MARVEL AGE™ RAGE PAGE!

Send your letters to MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE
% Marvel Comics Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016

Dear **Jim** and **Mark**,

Regarding **MARVEL AGE** #12:

Newswatch — how noteworthy!

Behind The Lines — how personal!

The Personnel Guide — how pronounced!

The Top Ten — how deci-mating!

The Secret Wars — how clandestine!

Looking Back at Marvel Age — how annual!

Heartburst — how commercial!

Frankenstein — how monstrous!

The A-Team — how pity-fool!

Epic — how illustrious!

Notes From Nuts?

Craig Maher
4 Gale Drive
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603

What a mailbag we had this month! Pretty soon they're going to have to install a whole separate freight elevator here at 387 Park Avenue South — just to accomodate the stacks of letters, postcards, and packages we get for *MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE*! We got an especially large response to *MARVEL AGE* #12! Goes to show ya — when you announce the latest projects from the world's greatest comics company, you've gotta be ready for the reaction!

Dear **MARVEL AGE**,

I've been wanting to send a letter to Marvel Comics for some time now, explaining what a fantastic job I think *everyone* up there is doing, and how much I appreciate everybody's splendid efforts. Well, I decided I should finally do it, and that **MARVEL AGE** would be the perfect magazine to send it to.

You're constantly turning out thoroughly enjoyable material, and it seems that no matter what new concept you're tangling with, you meet with complete success (except maybe assistant editors' month)!

As for **MARVEL AGE** itself, I like the price and I love its format. There are many things I don't know about the many Marvel characters and projects, and **MARVEL AGE** is always an invaluable source of information. You're previews give me things to look forward to, too!

I appreciate the way Marvel is forever ready to do the unexpected, instead of what's always safe and sure (except maybe assistant editors' month). So I just wanted to say "thank you" for your quality workmanship, and I hope you never run out of great talent or great ideas at good ol' Marvel (except maybe assistant editors' month).

David J. Kenney
(no address given)

Still won't forgive us for assistant editors' month, eh, David? Thanks for the vote of confidence, — it's great to know that we've got the greatest, most loyal batch of fans in the world — even if we go a little wacko every now and again!

Dear Marvel Agers,

This may be helpful to some of your readers. When I'm in an unfamiliar city and I want to buy comics, I look in the area Yellow Pages under "books." Often, some of the stores listed will have "comics" or "super heroes" listed in their names. Pay attention to stores that have odd names that pertain to science fiction, because often science fiction book stores will sell comics as well. Call before you visit and ask if the stores sell comics and back issues. In my home town of Minneapolis-St. Paul, two of the best places to get comic books, Midway Books and Shinders, are not strictly comics/sf shops at all, but full bookstores that carry direct sales comics as well as back issues. Hope this helps you find what you're looking for!

Anthony Dunlop
Bard College, Box 268
Annandale-on-Hudson, NY 12504

Thanks for the terrific hint, *Anthony*! Best to ya!

And now — we interrupt this letters page to bring you a very special section of letters! Our preview of *SECRET WARS*, and the many shocking changes this new maxi-series would bring, caused a reaction of great controversy beyond our wildest expectations! So many people wrote in with strong opinions, pro *and* con, that we can only *excerpt* these stirring missives in this space! And all this before the series even comes out! Here we go . . .

I can only hope that you'll print a retraction saying that **the Beyonder** is no longer threatening the Marvel universe. If not, then these "Secret Wars" of yours will undoubtedly disrupt any sense of continuity in the

super hero world. Take a bow, **Jim Shooter**, you're about to wreak chaos! . . . I have been collecting comics for twelve years, but when you can't fight change you either roll with it or back out. Unfortunately, I am out.

Gregg Jones
1607 Asmann Ave. Apt. #22
Cincinatti, OH 45229

I don't think **the She-Hulk** will work out as a member of the **Fantastic Four** as well as **the Thing**, but other than that, I think **SECRET WARS** is going to be great!

John Gracco
33981 Willowick Dr.
Eastlake, OH 44094

The many changes going on at Marvel are beginning to get a bit crazy! What's next? I don't want to know!

Mark Kuhn
7709 Hudson Ave.
North Bergen, NJ 07047

SECRET WARS sounds like a very good series, which I eagerly await coming out on the stands! But I do have a couple of questions. Was that a complete list of all the heroes and villains that will participate in the epic battle? Why isn't **Dr. Strange** listed? I found it weird that **Dr. Strange**, protector of the universe, would not be aware of such a conflagration. If such powerful beings as **Thor** and **Galactus** felt it necessary to join in, why wouldn't **Dr. Strange**?

Dan Norris
6801 Castillo Court
Citrus Heights, CA 95610

With all the publicity surrounding the debut of **THE SECRET WARS**, haven't all of the surprises been revealed? How interesting will it be if we already know what's going to happen? My guess is that *all* of the surprises have *not* been revealed, and that you talented people will make **SECRET WARS** more than interesting to follow!

Conrad P. Felber
1319 Rose Marie Avenue
Sudbury, Ontario
CANADA P3A 4E4

Wait a minute! Why is **Magneto** — a villain — in with the *heroes* on page 9 of **MARVEL AGE #12**? I'll be looking forward to **MARVEL SUPER HEROES: SECRET WARS!**

Damon Gilbreth
Kirkland, WA

But the single most talked about surprise coming in SECRET WARS had to be . . . you guessed it! Spider-Man's new costume! Sheesh! What a reaction! No other single event seems to have ever stirred up so many people in the history of comics! See for yourselves:

The new costume on **Spider-Man** is fantastic! Who's the genius who created the new look for the wall-crawler? The new **Spider-Man** looks more agile, lighter, more slender, faster, and more untouchable. More than ever, **Peter** looks like a real spider, dangerous and scary. The new costume makes **Spider-Man** all the more mysterious, and I like that.

Mazeris Fabrick
38 Bis Rue Guynemer
Montgeron, FRANCE

What the blue blazes do you think you're doing with **Spidey's** costume, huh? There are two things in life that you don't do — one of them is mess with a guy who has a gun, and the other is change **Spider-Man's** costume!

A. Jaye Williams
London, Ontario
CANADA

We think the new costume is very creative, but **Spider-Man** is a legend unto himself and a legend should not be changed. Don't change **Spider-Man's** costume!

Glenn Thompson
John McCabe
Herman Loew
Steven Melendez
Thomas J. Foust
Alex Sekulouski
Glenn Y. Leow
8705 Bay Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11214

For goodness sake, stick with it. Don't go yielding to fan pressure — and there will be a lot of *that* — and wind up changing back in six months. Just remember that change means growth, and if you return **Spider-Man** to his old look, he will not have grown at all. Some may not like your decision, but I do respect you for it.

Phillip M. Clark
800 Meadowgrass
Florissant, MO 63033

Whew! We've got a feeling that the controversy won't stop here, either! After all, you've only seen a *preview* — wait 'til you see the new *Spider-Man* outfit in *action*!

Finally, here's a letter that we think best summed up everybody's feelings about all the new changes and the risks that Marvel has always dared to take!

Dear Friends,

I was always taught to say goodbye to friends or relatives who were going away on a trip. So by this note, I want to say *bon voyage* to **Spidey, the Hulk, Captain America, the Thing**, and the rest. They're going on a long voyage of change and adventure, and although I say goodbye, I will also say hello to those who return as most of us do from a journey — relaxed, rested, hopefully better persons, ready to face the challenges of life ahead. The past twenty years that I have spent with your characters have never been boring. I wish them all well on their voyage to the Secret Wars and I hope they all return in one piece. And remember, it's comics — let's all enjoy them for what they are.

M.A. Goldberg
724 N. Sweetzer #2
Los Angeles, CA 90069

Dear **Jim** and **Mark**,

There is one project that has not been discussed in **M.A.** so far. I am referring to "**The Amazing Spider-Man and the Incredible Hulk**" Saturday Morning Cartoon show. I believe this is one of the best cartoon shows around and I have tried to see every episode. I'd be extremely interested in seeing a review article on it. I am particularly interested in learning about the artists, writers, and voices on the show. A list of episode titles and their authors would be interesting, too. **MARVEL AGE** would be the logical place for an article on this Marvel project. However, if **M.A.** doesn't have the space for such an article, could you at least publish an address where I could direct my inquiry? Happy first anniversary, **MARVEL AGE**!

Annie Gould
74 Carsbrooke Road
Etobicoke, Ontario
CANADA M9C 3C6

We'll get right on it, *Annie*!

Dear **Jim** and **Mark**,

I watched the ABC-TV movie "The Day After," which shocked and moved millions of people across America. I'm sure many of you at Marvel watched it, too. You've done stories about inter-galactic wars, mutants fighting mutants, battles between mystics, and **Magneto** or **Doctor Doom** taking on an entire country. But you've never done a story about an honest-to-goodness nuclear war. This would make an interesting **WHAT IF** or **Marvel Graphic Novel** story. It's an important and frightening question we must all face, and perhaps you could produce a story which dealt with the issue.

Tony Nicolas
140 Place Benoit #10
St. Laurent P.Q.
CANADA H4N 2H4

Dear Marvel Creators,

I have a question or two about my favorite character, **Prince Namor, the Sub-Mariner**. Why does he never use his superhuman powers other than flying, water-breathing, and super strength? In the **OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE**, you say that "Still in the prime of his life, **Namor's** natural powers have probably reached their peak." However, back in **FANTASTIC FOUR #9, Namor** demonstrated the power of all creatures of the sea, such as the electricity of the electric eel, and the radar sense of a cave fish. In **F.F. #14**, he demonstrated certain telepathic powers. In **STRANGE TALES #107**, he again demonstrated certain powers of sea creatures. Were these powers simply experiments performed on **Namor**? Does he for some reason refrain from using them again? I'd like to know.

Erik Carter
95 Depot St.
Duxbury, MA 02332

The *Sub-Mariner* Limited Series, announced previously and currently in the works, will answer many questions about his inscrutible and often difficult-to-understand character. There's more to the mysterious monarch of the deep than meets the eye, *Erik*, and you may have touched on something of particular significance! As always, keep reading!

© 1984 Marvel Comics Group. All rights reserved.

Dear **Jim** and **Mark**,

First, I see you're raising your price and going to Mando paper. I hate Mando. Everybody makes such a big deal about Mando. I'd rather have the cheap junk. That way they won't last as long and mint copies will be worth more!

Second, in issue #12, you mention "**Butch Guice** had just taken over penciling the **MICRONAUTS** from **Michael Golden**." I must remind you that after **Golden**, there was a **Howard Chaykin** run, a **Pat Broderick** run, a **Val Mayerik** fill-in, then **Keith Giffen** fill-ins, one by **John Garcia**, one by **Steve Ditko**, a run by **Gil Kane**, and fill-ins by **Luke McDonnell** and **Mike Vosburg**. Of course, we know that **Jim** wouldn't have deliberately left all those wonderful artists out, so obviously a few lines were lost in the mail between "from" and "**Michael Golden**."

Third, could the inker for the upcoming **MACHINE MAN** Limited Series possibly be **Neal Adams**?

Mike Hirschberg
President of P.W.B.N.A.
14024 Mathews Drive
Woodbridge, VA 22191

Mike, we would have had to increase our price anyway. The Mando paper is a bonus.

Second, you're right! And we're sending you a no-prize for correcting our grievous error!

Third, we ain't tellin'!

Dear **Shooter, Salicrup**, and **Lerer**,

I thought **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** was supposed to be on target! But then I read, "Readers of **The FANTASTIC FOUR** know that **Doom** is dead." Really, now! **Doom** appeared to die in **F.F. #260**, but in his last living moments, he is shown to be thinking, " . . . even in this condition, **Dr. Doom** is not helpless. There must be a way to extricate myself from this predicament. And there is! But it is something I have not attempted for many years. The conditions are far from ideal, but it is my one chance! I must attempt it!" The scene then shifts away, and later we are shown his mask lying in the rubble. But I'd be very much surprised if even one **F.F.** reader thinks the doctor is really dead!

Ralph Sizer
42 Nicholas Brown Yard
Providence, RI 02904

Well, *Ralph*, if you read our interview with *John Byrne* last month, then you already know that *you're* more hip than *we* are! But as far as we're concerned, it *still* isn't clear whether *Doom* is dead, alive, or what! Keep reading *F.F.* and *SECRET WARS* — and hope the suspense doesn't drive us off the deep end!

Before we sign off this month, we wanted to keep you informed about our cockeyed corner symbol, the redoubtable *Irving Forbush*! We've gotten several requests to re-print the excruciating origin of *Forbush-Man* right here in these pages — but still not enough to convince *Jim Salicrup* to give the go-ahead! You guys want to see this classic calamity or what? You gotta write and let us know! And if there's anything *else* on your minds, go ahead and drop us a line — you know where to find us! 'Til next month, hang loose!

THIS MAY BE THE CHANCE YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!

If you'd like to be a Marvel Comics writer, penciler, inker, colorist or letterer, this book was made for you! It's your chance to try out your creative skills under simulated "combat conditions" — as close as possible to actual, professional working conditions!

★ *Practice, to polish your skills!*
★ *Create samples to prove your talent!*
★ *Or just have fun, creating a comic book just like the Marvel stars do!*

The Official Marvel Comics Try-Out Book gives you--

- Printed on full-size (11″ × 17″) heavyweight Marvel artboard!
- Only **$12.95!**

NAME _____
(Please Print)
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE ____ ZIP _____

SEND THIS COUPON WITH YOUR CHECK OR MONEY ORDER!

TO: MARVEL COMICS
Dept. T
387 Park Avenue South
New York City, NY 10016

IF YOU'VE NEVER READ

epic

ILLUSTRATED

YOU'VE MISSED:

JIM STARLIN'S
METAMORPHOSIS ODYSSEY
the cosmic saga that began his popular space-fantasy series
DREADSTAR

•

An all-new adventure of the
SILVER SURFER
by STAN LEE and JOHN BUSCEMA

•

MARADA, THE SHE-WOLF
A fantastic new sword and sorcery heroine created by the writer-artist team of
CHRIS CLAREMONT
and JOHN BOLTON

WHY RISK MISSING ANY MORE?

EVERY issue is a milestone of lavishly produced graphic fantasy and science-fiction for the mature Marvel reader.
Look for EPIC at your favorite newsstand or subscribe now.

FIRST ISSUE
FREE!
SAVE 37%
WITH A CHARTER SUBSCRIPTION. YOU GET 6 ISSUES PLUS ONE FREE FOR $11.00
CANADA & FOREIGN: PLEASE ADD $2.00 PER SUBSCRIPTION.

MAIL TO:
EPIC ILLUSTRATED
SUBSCRIPTION DEPT.
387 PARK AVE. SOUTH
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016

EPIC ILLUSTRATED SUBSCRIPTION
NAME _____ AGE ____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP ____
SIGNED _____